

Nyctophobica

By

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Complete darkness.

Silent and still.

LONG HOLD...

We're getting uncomfortable sitting in the dark.

WHITE LETTERS SLOWLY FADE IN:

nyctophobia [nik-tuh-**foh**-bee-uh]

n. Psychiatry

1. an abnormal fear of night or darkness.

The WHITE LETTERS FADE OUT...

HOLDING ON BLACK...

Then, we hear frighten VOICES, SHARPLY WHISPERING to one another.

A CRACK of LIGHT appears.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

1

This light is coming through the crack of two doors from

INSIDE A DARK CLOSET.

Inside this closet we barely make out three figures, Darrel, (30's), Danielle, (30's) and Dana, (7). They huddle close together and in desperate fear they whisper hard to one another. *They are hiding from someone...*

A sudden THUMP, then a SHADOW moves across the cracked light. The THREE quickly freeze as the SHADOW crosses their frightened faces, not daring to make a sound.

DARREL covers his daughter's mouth and courageously peeks through the crack...

DARREL'S POV

A DARK FIGURE, highlighted by the moonlight, quickly searches the bedroom for the three...

The DARK FIGURE slips out of sight.

BACK TO SCENE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Quiet...

The THREE release a held breath.

BUT, the DARK FIGURE instantly re-appears at the closet doors!

DANA makes a little yelp.

The doors swing open and the DARK FIGURE yanks Danielle out of the closet. SCREAMS.

DARREL instantly bum-rushes out to save his wife in a desperate urban-warrior like cry as the CLOSET DOORS slam shut leaving DANA, and us, alone in the darkness.

We hear a mighty struggle.

CLOSE ON DANA'S FACE as she peers through the crack with hesitation. On her face is great panic. She covers her mouth, muffling her fears.

DANA'S POV

We see a great struggle of survival. Darrel is wrestling the dark figure as Danielle helplessly hides in a corner.

Furniture is violently knocked about.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The dark figure pulls out a SILVER KNIFE, raising it high over his head. It shines bright in the blue moonlight. The dark figure comes down hard with it but misses and Darrel kicks him in the chest, sending the knife spinning in Danielle's direction.

The dark figure and Darrel continue to battle for life and death. The dark figure is stronger and winning.

Danielle picks up the knife, a daring in her eye.

The DARK FIGURE strikes a lucky blow sending Darrel to the floor. He is stunned.

DANA (O.S.)

Daddy!

The DARK FIGURE turns towards the CLOSET DOORS and chuckles while slowly pulling out a handgun. He methodically points it at Darrell who is slowly regaining consciousness.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANIELLE'S courage is rising, her fingers tightening over the knife's handle...

Darrel notices his wife's intentions.

DARREL
(vis: Danielle)
No!

DANIELLE courageously lunges at the dark figure to save her husband's life but the DARK FIGURE instinctively points the gun at her and pulls the trigger. BANG!

She lands hard on the floor.

DANA (O.S.)
Mommy!

DARREL
Danielle!

Darrel flies to his wife's side in a shock. She's lifeless.

We hear the DARK FIGURE CHUCKLING from behind.

Darrel finds the knife at his wife's side and in a rage makes a blind backwards hack at the dark figure and manages a deep cut on his hooded face right down his left eye. The DARK FIGURE screams out in pain and falls right in front of the closed, closet doors.

DANA'S POV

We see an EXTREME CLOSE UP of a dark eye with a bloody line down through it ending on his cheek looking straight through the crack. Their eyes meet for a solid second.

BACK TO SCENE

INSIDE DARK CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

DANA lunges back in terror!

The SHADOW instantly disappears and we hear the sounds of HEAVY FOOTSTEPS sprinting away, allowing the light back in revealing a shaken DANA. She is frozen. Paralyzed. What damage has this done?

Beat...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL (O.S.)
Dana. Dana?

Beat.

DARREL (O.S.)
Dana, you can come out now. It's okay.

CLOSE IN ON DANA...

DARREL (O.S.)
Come on. Come out of the *darkness*.

FADE TO BLACK:

HOLD IN BLACK...

A WOMAN'S VOICE
(transitioning from a man's voice
to a woman's voice)
Sweetheart, come out of the *darkness*.

Beat.

A WOMAN'S VOICE
It's okay. Dana. Follow my voice. Find
the light.

WE FADE IN from a dark haze to a focus of light that
envelopes into an image right in front of us. We start to
notice an outline of a woman.

A WOMAN'S VOICE
Come on, Dana. You can do it. Find the
light.
(beat)
There you go.

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - PRESENT DAY

2

The camera focuses on the face of an intelligent woman
wearing glasses. This is Linda May, (40's), Dana's
Psychologist.

LINDA SNAPS her fingers once.

LINDA
And we're back.

Dana's EYES open wider.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA

Good.

Relieved, Linda relaxes and looks over at DARREL who has been quietly sitting off in the distance, observing. But, he is clearly shaken up, trying to hide his issues.

LINDA stoically marks his display then returns her focus back on Dana.

LINDA

Dana.

DANA returns a concerned gaze from her father to her psychologist. She is an attractive teenager but with eyes of a wild animal.

DANA

What happened? I can't remember...

A SOUND behind her.

She looks towards her father again, who is already making his way to the door.

DARREL

(hiding his face)

You guys go ahead. I'm just gonna step out for a--

LINDA

No. No. It's okay. Darrel! It's okay.

DARREL stops shy of the door, staring straight through it. Contemplating, trying to keep it together.

LINDA

(soothing voice, but with ulterior motives)

It's okay. Why don't you come over here with us.

DARREL

(embarrassed)

I'm sorry...

LINDA

No. It's okay. This involves the both of you. You both have been through a lot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL turns towards Linda and gives a defeated smile.

LINDA

Come over here, Darrel, and sit next
to your daughter. You two need each
other right now.

Dana sits up and makes room for her dad on the leather couch.
Darrel finds his spot and Dana takes his hand. They only have
one another.

LINDA

I know this is difficult--

DANA

What happened? Why can't I remember
falling asleep.

LINDA

I put you under. It's called Hypnotic
Regression Therapy and it helps to
recall certain memories that are
buried by the subconscious.

(reassuring, softer)

We had to go deep so I could
understand the possible genesis of
your phobia. Sometimes we experience
events in our life that are too severe
for our minds to process normally so
it compartmentalize these memories
deep into our subconscious to be dealt
with later.

(beat)

Dana, there was a memory that was
buried so deep that when you recalled
it you acted like...

DANA

Like what?

Linda hesitates. Peeks over at Darrel.

Dana anxiously searches her dad for answers but he won't meet
their eyes. Back to Linda.

DANA

Like--

LINDA

(little shaken)

--like you were still there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dana is confused and nervous. Searches her dad again.

DANA

Dad?

DARREL is doing his best to control his emotions. This unnerves Dana even more.

LINDA is almost relishing in Darrel's own trauma.

DANA

(vis: Linda)

What did I say?

Linda returns to Dana, trying to calm her but nervous...

LINDA

Dana, you did so good. Better than I was hoping--

DANA

What memory did I recall!

Beat.

LINDA

(reluctantly)

You recalled the night your mother was murdered, Dana. You were hiding in a closet, waiting in the dark. You witnessed the whole thing. I'm sorry.

Darrel finally lets out some suppressed grief. He silently heaves as Dana holds him.

LINDA ponders an opportune thought.

CUT TO:

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

3

Dana and Darrel exit the office into the

HALLWAY

followed by Linda who keeps an endearing but professional study on Darrel.

LINDA

Darrel, you got a moment? There's something I'd like to talk to you
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA (CONT'D)
about.

Dana stops and looks back at Linda. She suspects a hidden romance between the two and resents it.

DARREL is apprehensive.

Linda finds Dana's searching eyes. Back to Darrel.

LINDA
It won't take long. I promise.

DARREL
(vis: Dana)
Honey, why don't you wait for me in
the car. I'll be there in a minute.

Darrel hands Dana the car keys who hesitates for a second, giving Linda a chariness look.

Linda feels this distrust in Dana and casually leans against the door frame, folding her arms, giving a comforting smile.

DARREL
Go on.

Dana slowly turns and heads down the hallway, looks back one more time at the two before disappearing out of sight.

Darrel turns back at Linda. She moves close to him in a familiar way. She reaches out a soft hand at his waist to make affectionate contact.

Darrel retreats a micrometer...it's enough to give Linda the hint.

Linda falls back on the frame, looking away. Rejection is hard for her. Loneliness is harder.

Awkward beat.

She studies him again.

DARREL
Don't do that.

LINDA
I can't even imagine the guilt you
face...every time she has an attack.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

That cut Darrel deeper than she thought it would. She instantly regrets it.

Darrel deflects this truth.

DARREL

You know what. I can't do this right now.

(turning away)

That's a new low by the way.

Darrel makes a move to leave but Linda catches his arm.

LINDA

Darrel.

(sincere)

She's ready.

Darrel is desperate for an answer...

DARREL

Ready for what?

LINDA

I think I found a way to cure Dana.
For good.

She puts a soft hand on his forearm. He's listening, but with some apprehension.

LINDA

Okay. Just hear me out, please.

(nervous beat)

It's unproven and still in the experimental stage. But the theoretical results are off the ch--

DARREL

No. Absolutely not. Linda, you're not going to use my daughter as a guinea pig--

LINDA

--Wait. I know. That's why I wanted to put her under first. See if she could even handle the neurological stress. Darrel, I've never seen anybody regress memories that quickly. It's like they are just hiding behind some thin wall. She's the perfect candidate for this new kind of psychotherapy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Darrel is cautious but credulous.

DARREL

What are you talking about, exactly?

LINDA

It's a higher form of cognitive therapy that targets the subconscious. The subconscious controls her phobia. And hypnosis is the way to target the subconscious. Or a better way to say it is to say to manipulate it...We replace the negative memory with a positive memory.

DARREL

And how in the world could you do that?

LINDA

It's called Hypno-Psychodrama Therapy. A radical new treatment that alters the subconscious' control over a certain memory. We recreate the events of that memory where in a controlled environment the patient who is under hypnosis has a chance to interactively alter the outcome in a pre-staged setting. Specifically, Dana could eliminate the intruder before the mom type dies, thus reversing the negative association of darkness.

This is all above Darrel's head. He looks back towards the office, pondering the "emotional stress" he and Dana already went through.

LINDA

Everything would be in a controlled environment. By me. The actors. The location, the set. Everything.

(beat)

Any details she can give us in a few more sessions...

DARREL

I don't know.

Linda instantly feels her own impatience and softens away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA

Okay. There's still time.

Darrel does a quick look down the hallway.

DARREL

I have to go. She's waiting. It's getting dark.

LINDA

Yeah. I know.

Darrel finds her beautiful, green eyes and gives a pause of chivalry. Linda waits in august. Any other couple would kiss goodbye...but not these two.

LINDA

(relenting)

Okay.

DARREL

Okay.

Darrel turns and leaves, and with every slow step away from Linda is a quicker step to Dana.

CLOSE ON LINDA who watches Darrel eventually run down the hall--want in her eye.

FAST FADE WITH THEME MUSIC (DANA'S MUSIC)

EXT. DARREL'S TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

4

WE'RE IN A WINTER MONTH AND NEAR DUSK

PARKING LOT

DANA has an alert eye all around her. She is studying the creeping blue shadows edging along the ice cold asphalt below. Her panic level is at a "3" out of a 10, being the deadly worst.

Passerby-s wearing heavy jackets and scarves...

SMASH DARREL to the door. DANA jumps. She frustratingly points to her watch.

INSIDE TRUCK

Through the rolled up windows Dana hears--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL

I know.

Opens door, gets in.

DARREL

I'm sorry.

She's a detective, looking him over as he closes the brittle door and puts the already running engine in gear. He finally breaks away from his sheepish look-for-cars-behind-me move then finally meets her eyes.

DANA has her arms crossed, waiting to get an explanation for his tardiness.

DARREL

What?

DANA

What took so long?

Darrel backs it out...

DARREL

You know, adult stuff.

DANA

I hate when you say that.

Dana turns away from him and faces her window. The last of the BRIGHT ORANGE RAYS hits her face as the truck stops ready for another gear change. Panic level drops to "2".

DANA

Take El Toro. Aliso Creek is clogged up by now.

DARREL

You got it navigator.

The truck DARTS out of the parking lot.

DANA

And keep it under 50. We can't afford anymore speeding tickets.

She turns to him in seriousness. He cracks a smile.

DARREL

Yeah, they know me pretty well by now,
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL (CONT'D)
don't they?

Dana quickly turns away, hiding her smile.

CLOSE ON DANA as her smile fades. She looks up at the last of the SHARP LIGHT dropping behind the hilltop above as the truck moves into another shadow. She looks down at her watch. Panic level to "4". Hurry.

MUSIC RISES.

ROLL TITLE SEQUENCE: **NYCTOPHOBICA**

START MONTAGE OF DANA'S WORLD AS A NYCTOPHOBE:

ROLL OPENING CREDIT SEQUENCE:

-- EXT. HOME - AFTER DUSK

INSIDE TRUCK

CABIN LIGHT floods on Dana who goes through a short sequence of taps on her phone. She looks up and a second later a world of light takes over the lawn and the front of the house. They get out and approach the front door on a walkway highlighted with running lamps.

INSIDE HOME - CONTINUOUS

The FRONT DOOR opens and immediately the whole house is lit up by an automated system, CEILING LIGHTS, FLOOR LAMPS, BOARD RUNNERS, ect. Dana and Darrel enter.

DARREL
Don't forget to turn off the lights
outside.

DANA goes through another sequence on her phone and we see the lights outside instantly go off.

-- INT. HOME - MORNING

DANA'S BEDROOM

An ALARM CLOCK GOES OFF. DANA wakes with a start but instantly catches herself before she panics. OVERHEAD SHOT LOOKING DOWN on Dana lying still on her back in bed. Uncertainty in her face. She is staring straight up, REVERSE, we see about thirty or so flood lamps attached to the ceiling pointing down. Her HAND is hovering over a giant RED BUTTON.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She moves her hand from the red button to the alarm clock and hits it. The alarm goes dead.

-- INT. HOME - DAY

SHOWER

Dana is SINGING behind a milky curtain. Steam escapes upward. SUNLIGHT from an upper window floods the space. INSIDE THE CURTAIN with Dana her VOICE BOOMS. Happy. Panic level "1". A small cloud suddenly drifts over the sun altering the brightness in the shower. Dana immediately stops singing and throws a hand outside the shower curtain and over another large RED BUTTON fixed on the wall. She/we is watching the cloud move over the sun through the window. Waiting still. It finally leaves and sunlight returns full as does her booming voice. OUTSIDE the curtain we PULL BACK TO WIDE and find a ROLL-AWAY RACK on wheels holding about twenty other flood lamps just like the ones on her ceiling pointing directly at the shower.

-- INT. HOME - DAY

Dana walks down the

HALLWAY

and notices one of the ceiling lights overhead has gone out. IRRITATION.

HALLWAY CLOSET

Dana opens the door and it is filled with hundreds of new light bulbs in boxes. She pulls a hanging string overhead and a light comes on. She pushes her hand through the light and takes a new box. She pulls the string again and the shadow returns. The door quickly shuts.

-- INT. HOME - NIGHT

LIVING ROOM

The living room is dimly lit by the fireplace. DARREL is reading in his chair next to a soft lamp. On the end table next to him rests a FLASHLIGHT. We PAN over to DANA. She is lying on a nearby couch watching something in her virtual reality goggles. She giggles out loud. Darrel watches her for a nervous second, then back at his book, an uninterested beat then back at Dana with unusual attentiveness. He slowly lays his book down. He is waiting for something. He expects the worst...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- INT. HOME - NIGHT

DANA'S BEDROOM

DANA is sound asleep in bed. It's quiet and dark. Then a neighbor's dog BARKS, slightly disturbing Dana from her peaceful dreams. The dog barks again and Dana fully wakes up. Her EYES absorb the darkness! Panic level "5". She instantly hits the big red button and the CEILING explodes with BLINDING LIGHT. REVERSE CLOSE on DANA. She is motionless, staring straight up and through us. She is somewhere lost in her mind with a look of internal distance and a complete relief from winning a bloody battle...

-- INT. HOME - NIGHT

HALLWAY CLOSET

The door opens and we see Dana's HAND reaching up to pull the string. The bulb POPS! DANA stares at the bulbs hiding in the shadow just in front of her, contemplating the risk. Her HAND finally stretches forwards but freezes in the shadow, then jerks away.

MOMENTS LATER

The ROLL-AWAY RACK of flood lamps from the bathroom stops in front of the closet. DANA plugs it in and the shadow inside turns instant white. Over kill. Her HAND then takes a box.

-- INT. HOME - NIGHT

SHOWER

DANA is taking a bath behind a partially closed curtain. The space is glowing BRIGHT WHITE. She is singing but quietly this time as if not to disturb something unseen. Unsettling...

KITCHEN

DARREL closes the microwave door...

SHOWER

The ROLL-AWAY RACK is facing the shower/tub and is burning bright with a warm HUM of electricity.

CLOSE ON DANA who is now quiet, holding her knees close to her. Uncomfortable. She is waiting for something...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KITCHEN

...and hits the START BUTTON and instantly it blows a fuse! BLACKNESS! All the lights in the house go out! Suddenly, we hear the SHRIEKING SCREAMS coming from the

SHOWER

DANA is screaming and thrashing about in the tub, highlighted by the dark moon light. Panic level "6".

DANA

Dad! Dad!

DARREL bursts in and flies to his daughter's side where she is already reaching for the large flashlight he has for her. Dana instantly shines the bright beam in her face. She starts to calm as though a crack addict has just got a fix.

DARREL

I'll be back. Gotta reset the breaker.
You be okay?

She calmly nods while staying focused on the light.

Darrel leaves and we CLOSE on DANA. She slows her breathing.

-- INT. HOME - NIGHT

...LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DARREL has fallen asleep in his chair, his book resting on his chest. The fire has burnt to a low smolder. Off screen we hear DANA give a short yelp of fear that sounded similar to the shrieks in the shower earlier. DARREL jolts awake and quickly takes the flashlight from the end table to give to Dana but as we CUT to her we hear her giggle again as she is still watching a movie through her VR goggles.

DARREL sinks back into his chair, sighs, then closes his eyes while holding the flashlight at the ready.

-- INT. HOME - NIGHT

...DANA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

We return to DANA lying on her back with the powerful ceiling lights still burning down upon her comatose face, eyes open. She is beyond motionless. The neighbor's dog continues to bark.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL SLOWLY ENTERS FRAME and gently pulls the covers over her as not to disturb her. His FACE is full of love and affection as he gazes into her open, wild EYES. He stands at her side contemplating something. "Why my daughter?". A tear freezes up.

With a HAND he gently closes her eyes like you would a dead person then he shuts off the flood lamps overhead letting Dana rest in peace as we...

SLOW FADE TO BLACK:

END MONTAGE OF DANA'S WORLD:

HOLD IN BLACK FOR A MOMENT.

A WOMAN'S VOICE
(motherly)
Sweetheart, come out of the darkness.
(fading)
Sweetheart?

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

5

Dana's best friend, JULIE, (17) is sitting on the grass next to her in front of the school building, trying to get her attention. Julie has been Dana's adopted mother over the years and treats her as such.

JULIE
Sweetheart...

DANA is sitting still, holding her knees close to her chest, chin resting on her arms, clearly in deep thought.

JULIE
Dana!

Finally, DANA snaps out of her daydream and finds her.

Julie is a little Puerto Rican cutie but Dana is the star of the two, though more modest.

DANA
What?

JULIE
Didn't you hear anything I said?

DANA
Oh. I guess not. Sorry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE pulls down her sunglasses and looks at her adopted daughter with some parent-like concern forcing Dana to give an explanation.

DANA

I'm sorry. Mom... I haven't been able to concentrate, lately. Dr. May has been doing more sessions than usual.

(quieter)

It's wearing on me.

Dana is hoping this gets her out of jail.

JULIE

Honey, you're gonna be the end of me, I swear.

Dana sheepishly grins...

DANA

I know, I know, I know.

Julie smiles and puts her sunglasses back on, giving herself more of a Hollywood style. Her mischievous smile turns into a full Glamour Magazine chic, making a display of herself.

The school grounds are lively with many students, all performing their part of adolescent life in their respected clicks--geeks, jocks and mean girls.

JULIE looks off in the distance. Spots someone.

DANA

(trying to find)

What?

JULIE

(nodding)

There.

WE FOLLOW two teenage boys walking across the grass in the distance. One is a young Val Kilmer looking jock named ALEX and the other is a loner-looking side kick dressed in black named, CHRIS. In ten years Alex will be a greedy stock broking weasel and Chris will be either dead or in jail.

DANA spots them and slinks back.

JULIE flirtatiously waves.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE

Hey boys...

The boys notice her and smile like a wolf would to a lamb.
They head towards the girls.

Dana lets out a noticeable sigh. She looks up at the
sky...just a few innocent clouds.

Off Dana's look...

JULIE

Oh relax. You don't want to be single
forever. Do you?

DANA - *I guess not* - look.

JULIE

Good. Now pucker up...
(re: Dana's modest looks)
...whatever you got, pucker it.

Julie "puckers".

The boys arrive, carrying a strong scent of hormonal douche
bags.

CHRIS

(vis: Julie)

Hey baby.

Chris gives Julie an embarrassing kiss. Julie plays it Gone-
With-The-Wind style.

ALEX eagerly notices Dana who has no interest in getting
"married". Her life is filled with reality.

JULIE

Alex... this is Dana.

ALEX meets her with a half genuine smile. Dana gives one back
just for Julie's sake. Julie notice this attempt. Plays it
off.

JULIE

She loves mountain biking, taking
walks in the park and rescuing lost
puppies...

DANA cracks a shy smile. The ice is breaking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE
...but moonlights as an undercover
stripper working as an informant for
the FBI.

CHRIS
Ooh. Mysterious.

Now Dana's the talk of the party and comes around a little.

ALEX
(reaching out his hand to Dana)
Hi. I'm Alex. As you already know.

CHRIS
What a douche!

Alex hits his buddy.

DANA
(shaking Alex's hand)
I'm Dana.
(embarrassed)
Ditto.

Now Alex's smile is genuine.

JULIE
Alright!

ALEX
Hey, why don't we go over there and
sit in the shade.

Dana notices the large tree Alex is nodding to. Lot's of
SHADOWS. Panic level "3". She glances hard at Julie who knows
what it means.

JULIE
(under her breath)
Come on. He's cute.

Panic level "4".

The boys are waiting.

JULIE
Sure. Let's go!

CHRIS
Cool! Party time!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA stands up with Julie and anxiously looks through all the passing cars coming in and out of the loading zone. Parents picking up their kids.

Julie grabs her arm--

JULIE

You got to face your fears sometime.

Just then a familiar honk from a truck. Dana quickly turns around and finds her dad pulling up.

DANA

Oh. I gotta go.

The BOYS stop and turn around.

DANA

(vis: Alex)

Nice meeting you.

Dana trots to the truck as JULIE watches her friend dodge a bullet. She's disappointed but does so with a loving understanding.

EXT./INT. DARREL'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

6

Dana's rushes in and slams the door.

DANA

You're late. You're always late.

DARREL notices the two boys pulling a less than enthused Julie towards the shadowy tree.

DARREL

Looks like I was right on time.

Darrel puts it in gear and the truck pulls away.

DANA turns to look at her "mom" one last time and finds Julie taking off her Hollywood glasses, trying to get one last peek of her "daughter" running away. Somehow, their eyes tragically meet.

RISEING MUSIC OF DREAD

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

7

The only sound we hear is the ever present FOREBODING MUSIC. It's like a ghost, we can't see it but we know it's there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA approaches the door, opens it and Dana and Darrel enter. They greet each other with warm handshakes and a moment of cordial conversations. Then, Linda escorts them inside. They have done this many times.

CUT TO:

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

8

LINDA and DANA are sitting face to face. Linda is explaining something to Dana and raises up a hand-held PLASTIC ROD supporting two small, clear LENSES facing her/us.

DANA'S FACE is pulsated with flashes of bright light.

Linda is repeating something to her. We can barely comprehend the word. It is the word "falling". She repeats this over and over.

DARREL stays invisible in the background, away from the action. He watches with anxious attentiveness. He hopes with every passing session his daughter will finally reach a breakthrough. A healing. Then he could finally let go of this guilt.

ON DANA as her face is struck with quicker flashes of light, almost reaching a strobe effect. Her EYES droop then they completely close. Her head falls to one side. She is under. The flashing light stops.

CUT TO:

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

9

Darrel helps Linda lay an unconscious Dana on the couch. A creepy moment to think what happens when you are under hypnosis.

CUT TO:

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

10

Linda is writing on a yellow notepad as DANA, with eyes closed, animates a memory. The same memory as before. Session after session. Each one a little deeper in time.

INSERT YELLOW NOTEPAD

Linda etches more tiny words at the last available space at the bottom of the page then flips it underneath to begin a new page. She quickly scribbles more tiny words starting at

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

the top.

BACK TO SCENE

WE PAN OVER to her desk and notice a stack of used yellow pads. A mountain of details already of that memory.

DARREL, all this time, session after session, has been reliving this scene in guilt-ridden grief. Forced to listen to this insufferable story of not saving his wife. Over and over. HE sits in a chair, head hanging low...

LINDA, peeks over at him from time to time to observe him. Almost with satisfaction of nearing a goal.

She is secretly working him. Slowly moving him to his breaking point. She wants him to give in to the radical treatment she suggested.

Linda is spurred on by her loneliness. If she can cure Darrel's daughter then he can move on and focus on a new life. A romantic life.

DANA'S FACE is slightly maligned.

QUICK SERIES OF SHOTS PLAYING OVER FOREBODING MUSIC AND INTERCUT WITH FLASHBACKS FROM DARREL

-- Dana, Darrel and Linda greet anew, smile and shake hands.

-- Flashes of light on DANA'S FACE.

-- Linda silently repeating a word.

-- Dana going under.

-- Laying Dana on the couch.

-- Dana being more animated.

-- Linda quickly scribbling on yellow note pad.

-- Darrel hunching over. Hard to watch.

-- Yellow notepad FLOPS on top of other notepads.

-- DARREL looks up at us from his chair. Something harrowing in his face.

-- SMILES. HANDSHAKES.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- SLOW ZOOM ON DARREL. ON HIS HARROWING EYES.

-- Quicker light flashes bombard Dana's face. HER LIFELESS BLACK EYES receiving the stimuli to her brain.

-- She goes under.

-- ZOOMING IN ON DARREL'S EYES. HE'S watching. Absorbing. Signals to his own brain.

-- Laying Dana down, in SLOW MOTION like someone is softly falling on the couch.

-- Darrel's EYES are watering over.

-- (FB) BEDROOM - IN SLOW MOTION - DANIELLE is softly falling on the floor.

-- Rapid scribbling. Page flips!

-- DARREL jerks awake in fright!

-- CU smiles, handshakes.

-- Strobe light.

-- Linda MOUTHING the word 'falling'.

-- Dana goes under. Head falling harder.

-- DARREL rocking back and forth in torment.

-- Rapid scribbling making SCRATCHING sounds!

-- (FB) BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS, DARREL cries in shock with horror on his face - "Danielle!"

-- STROBE LIGHT!

-- CU of Dana going under, head slumping over like she is dead.

-- Dana falling hard on the couch.

-- ECU ON DARREL'S WILD and BLACK EYES! VO of the dark figure CHUCKLING!

-- (FB) BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS, Darrel making a blind desperate hack at the dark figure behind. OS the dark figure HOWLS in pain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- Dana goes under. Falls dead.

-- LINDA'S smile turns into a HOWL as she laughs at something.

-- ECU on DARREL'S WILD EYES!

-- Dana goes under! SOUND of a gunshot from the memory. BANG!

-- Dana's head hits the couch. DEAD!

-- DARREL in his chair violently shaking his head "no". DANIELLE'S VO, "Darrel!".

SMASH CUT BACK TO SCENE ON:

A YELLOW NOTEPAD CRASHING DOWN on about a dozen other yellow note pads. Months of work.

DARREL jerks his head up. COMPLETE SILENCE. Beat. His face is mangled and worn.

CUT TO:

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

11

Dana and Darrel exit the office into the

HALLWAY

meekly followed by Linda.

DARREL turns around.

LINDA puts on a comforting smile, folds her arms and leans against the door frame.

Darrel turns back to Dana and is about to say something--

DANA

--I know. Adult stuff. But don't be late. There's a storm coming in tonight and I wanted to do some more gardening before it gets here.

Darrel sheepishly grins and hands her the car keys.

DANA walks out of sight. Then Darrel faces Linda.

LINDA

We have enough detail now. And she's
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA (CONT'D)
ready. This is the time to decide if
you want to proceed. Her subconscious
will never--

DARREL
--Linda, I think she needs a break.

Linda is sidelined.

LINDA
Oh? And, uh...what? Has something
happened?

DARREL
She's hasn't been herself lately.
She's been getting more and more
distant, like she's living in another
world. Sometimes she doesn't even
notice me when I speak to her and--

Darrel prematurely stops himself. Shies away.

LINDA
What is it? Has something happened?
You can tell me.

DARREL
(clears his throat)
The other night I heard a noise. I got
up to see...and it was her. She was
walking around the house, in the dark.

Linda focuses on a serious thought.

DARREL
That's not her, Linda. That's not my
daughter.

LINDA
Darrel, listen to me, that wall is
getting thinner and thinner. There's
not much separating what she remembers
and doesn't remember. Those two halves
are melding into one and there's gonna
be a day when she's has a serious
attack and that will force that memory
through and when it does I'm afraid
her phobia will entrench so deep into
her psyche that she'll never come
back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She's looking tenderly into his eyes. He feels it.

LINDA

I'm afraid we're running out of time.

A cloud outside darkens a window. Darrel notices it. He's feeling pushed.

DARREL

Yeah... I'm sorry, I have to go.

LINDA

Okay...well, when do you think you might have her back in.

DARREL

I don't know. I just want stay home for a while. I want us to stay home.

Their eyes hold for a second. Linda can feel the chasm widening.

DARREL

(evading)

I'm sorry.

He can feel her eyes on him.

Darrel starts to turn...

DARREL

I miss *her*-

Quickly catches himself--

DARREL

I miss my daughter.

He takes a timid step away...

DARREL

I'll call you.

LINDA watches him walk away, AGAIN, then--

LINDA

Darrel.

He stops but doesn't turn around. Beat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA

Have they ever caught him? The man who
killed your wife?

DARREL'S WILD EYES return.

He doesn't budge.

Long pause...

DARREL

No.

Darrel walks away.

LINDA re-crosses her arms and ponders a maleficent thought
then abruptly walks into her office and shuts the door.

The FOREBODING MUSIC RISES BACK UP...

INT./EXT. HOME - DAY - LATER

12

INSIDE

From a point-of-view through a window we watch Dana, on her
knees, planting spring flowers out in the front yard. She is
wearing gardening clothes that look like they should be worn
by an older woman.

OUTSIDE

CLOSE UP ANGLE ON Dana who is working feverishly. At an
unnatural and an unpleasurable speed. She is breathing hard.

A SHADOW over head hits her.

She stops and looks up with sweat over her brow. She frowns
with resentment. Panic level '3'.

First CLOUDS of the storm approaching. They are dark and
formidable.

She looks directly at the house. At the WINDOW. We see her
dad. He is waving for her to come in.

INSIDE

From a point-of-view through the window we watch Dana collect
her tools. The camera pans away...

INSIDE DARREL'S BEDROOM

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The door opens, letting light enter the dark room as Darrel walks in and crosses to a mirror dresser. On the walls are hung picture frames that are just out of our focus and light.

He opens a drawer and pulls out a hand full of loose pictures. As he goes through them his EYES start to water over.

INSERT PICTURES

We see pictures being rifled through one by one, in the low light, either of Danielle alone or of Danielle and a seven year old Dana together or selfie shots of the three. All glorious and happy.

The pictures stop rifling on one picture of just Danielle. She is outside somewhere, on her knees, planting flowers, wearing the same gardening outfit.

We hear a sound at the bedroom door.

BACK TO SCENE

It's Dana, standing at the door, in her mother's gardening outfit. She flips on the light, exposing the scene.

DARREL is about to break.

DANA

Dad!

She rushes over to sit at his side.

She notices the pictures in his hand and then the one of Danielle in the same gardening clothes.

DANA

You miss her, huh?

Darrel kinda laughs it off as he wipes his nose.

DARREL

I'm sorry, hun. Seeing you out there...

(turns to her, studies her)

You're looking more and more like her every day.

DANA

I'm sorry, dad.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL

For what?

She takes the picture from his hand and stares at it for a second.

DANA

For not being able to remember her.

DARREL

Hey, hey--

DANA

I wish I could.

Dana looks up at her dad. She's about to break herself.

DARREL

--it's okay.

DANA

What's wrong with me, dad?

She falls into his arms. He holds her, then looks up at some of the framed pictures on the wall. They are the same ones as the pictures he was looking through, blown up and framed.

More SHADOWS invade the window light as storm clouds move in. A ghost that never leaves.

INT. HOME - NIGHT

13

BLACKNESS...

Quiet and still...

Suddenly, we hear MOVEMENT somewhere in the house.

QUICK SHOTS of DARK ROOMS, searching for someone.

Then we see a DARK FIGURE cross the hallway into another room.

DARREL'S BEDROOM

POV from someone watching Darrel sleep.

REVERSE - We see the blackened form of the shadowed figure in a hoodie looking back at us. Perfectly still.

BACK ON DARREL who starts to move then fully awakens to find

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

a dark figure over him!

DARREL
WHO'S THERE!

BEAT on dark figure. No movement.

Darrel snaps the lights on!

It is DANA, standing lifeless. Looking straight ahead. Not herself.

Darrel quickly controls his heart attack.

DARREL
Man! Sweetheart! What are you doing?

Long pause on Dana who then looks downward and makes eye contact and gives a fake smile like she does when greeting Linda, but her smile turns wicked...

DANA
Waiting in the dark!

...and pulls a concealed CHEF KNIFE from around her side and raises it up...it shivers in the moonlight casting sharp reflections to hit DARREL...

...the KNIFE comes down hard--

--SCREAMS!

INT. DARREL'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

14

DARREL awakens from a nightmare to bloody murder SCREAMS coming from the far side of the house.

CUT TO:

HALLWAY

Darrel is running fast with a shining flashlight in his hand then crashes through

DANA'S BEDROOM

He stops and pans around for her in the dark room. Nothing.

LOUDER SCREAMS! Coming from the CLOSET.

Darrel slams open the closet doors and finds DANA having a

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

panic level "6" attack. Her arms are flailing about in contortions.

He instantly takes a hold of her to calm her down and when she finally finds him he gives her the flashlight and she instantly sucks in the beam into her eyes like a scuba diver coming up for desperate air.

After a tense moment--

DARREL

Honey. What in the world were you doing in there?

DANA

I woke up in here. I was having a nightmare.

DARREL

What?

DANA

I was trying to remember mom when I fell asleep.

Darrel is very concerned.

DARREL

Dana, what did you remember?

DANA

That me, you and mom were hiding in a closet. And somebody was looking for us.

Darrel is very concerned. Dana starts to cry.

DANA

I was trying to see her face, dad. But it was too dark.

Darrel takes her in his arms as she sobs.

DANA

It was too dark.

INT. DARREL'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

15

Darrel is on the phone, sitting in the dark.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL

I need to be able to trust you. I know there's risks involved. So tell me what you're not telling me.

After a pause...

LINDA VO

When the patient is placed under hypnosis and put in an extreme emotional environment the chances of developing other disorders multiply exponentially. Everything is fed into the subconscious. That's the risk.

Long beat...

LINDA VO

Darrel? You there? Hun...

DARREL slowly hangs up the phone as Linda's words are left on the line.

Hold...

EXT. CALIFORNIA COAST - SUMMER SUNSET

16

QUICK ESTABLISHING SHOTS giving us the hint that the seasons have changed, time has passed--

--A perfect picture of the California west coast highlighted by the ORANGE GLOW cascaded by the DISTANT, SETTING SUN.

--IN SLOW MOTION: EPIC, TURQUOISE WAVES SLOWLY CRASH against the cliffs. FOAMY WATER SPRAYS. BACK TO SCENE:

--SEAGULLS float in the air. CU of a seagull perched on a rock in warm tranquility as its feathers ruffle in the breeze.

--The turquoise waves continue to crash against the rock, etching the beach in real time.

--WIDE SHOT of beach goers.

--ANGLE ON the beach goers, volleyball, throwing frisbees, sunbathing. We can hear the bustle of the beach. It has its own beat.

An upbeat SONG that a teenager would listen too RISES UP.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EXT/INT. PCH - JULIE'S CONVERTIBLE - CONTINUOUS

17

JULIE and DANA are fully enjoying their summer break as they cruise down Pacific Coast Highway.

The upbeat SONG is coming from the convertible's sound system. It is BOOMING!

They are dressed in jean shorts and bikinis, partially covered with loosely tied plaid shirts. Sunglasses and oversized sun hats complete the total package. Long hair whips in the air.

They squeal with typical teenage-girl enthusiasm, estrogen oozing out with every pulsating THUMP.

Two twenty-something SURFER DUDES, walking down the sidewalk, stop and take notice as the girls pass them by. One of the dudes smiles.

The girls GIGGLE. Proud of their prowess.

They turn up the MUSIC, dancing to the beat as they leave the surfer dudes(POV)watching them drive off into the sunset...

CUT TO:

The SUN continues its silent descent into the ocean...God's time clock ticking away on the horizon.

DANA is enjoying a sense of something carefree. Unusual. Off.

DANA

Yes! I am loving this!

JULIE carefully takes notice of her "daughter" as she's reapplying her red lipstick.

IN SLOW MOTION

The last ORANGE RAYS catch the corner of DANA'S flirtatious red-lipped smile then blanketed by deep shadows cast by the passing buildings. The shadows have no effect on Dana.

JULIE continues to study Dana...suspiciously. Nervously.

BACK TO SCENE

Julie finds the sun dropping. Their day almost over.

She turns the MUSIC down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA

Hey!

JULIE

(unnerved)

It's getting late. Your dad is going to freak if we're not home by dark. How about we order some pizza and have this party at home?

DANA

(playful)

But, mom...

JULIE

No "buts" young lady.

(smiling)

If I don't take you home you might get us arrested. Crazy girl.

Dana puckers her glossy red lips at her.

JULIE

There you go. Pucker!

Dana lets out another teenage squeal of revelry.

ANGLE ON CAR making a left onto Newport Coast Dr., heading north towards Laguna Hills...

JULIE sneaks another look at Dana, deeper this time, more sympathetic...then turning to pity, then guilt.

INT. HOME - TWILIGHT

18

Julie and Dana enter carrying their hats and glasses and a pizza box. LIGHTS come on.

DARREL (O.S.)

Is that you girls?

DANA

We're home, dad!

JULIE

Hi Mr. P.!

DARREL

I was beginning to wonder if I had to order pizza agai--.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA
(not paying attention)
We got pizza!

LIVING ROOM

DARREL in his chair, working on a crossword puzzle.

DARREL
(less than enthused, sotto)
Great.

The girls come in and give him a patronizing kiss.

DANA
(sarcastic)
Hi daddy. We got olives, anchovies and
onions.

She flops the box on his lap. He opens it and looks in.

DARREL
Mmm. Sounds French.

JULIE
(trying to kiss him)
Hi darling.

DARREL
(jerking away)
Really?

The girls walk out, giggling.

DARREL
(taking a piece)
Did you have a good time!

DANA (O.S.)
We'll be in the bedroom!

We hear one last hormonal hoo-rah.

The PHONE by Darrel's chair BRINGGGS!

DARREL
Yeah?

After a pause he gives a worrisome look down the hall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL

I understand...Yeah. No problem.

DANA'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The girls are winding down, getting casual. "At home" personalities.

A KNOCK on the other side of the door.

DANA

Open.

Door opens. The GIRLS look up and find DARREL holding the portable phone in one hand, with a look of fatherly seriousness on his face.

DANA

What's wrong?

DARREL

I got some good news and bad news. Bad news, my partner is stuck in the Bay. He's having trouble closing this merger we've been working on for the past four months. He called and asked if I could go up there and you know, do my thang.

DANA is unimpressed.

DANA

What do you mean? They can't get somebody else? There has to be someone--

DARREL

Honey, I was originally the one asked to go up there in the first place but I told them I couldn't...

(cautious)

...for obvious reasons.

Panic level "3".

DANA

So, how long will you be?

DARREL

(hesitant)

Two nights.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA

Two nights? Are you serious?

Panic level "4".

JULIE puts a hand on Dana's shoulder.

JULIE

Sweetheart. You know I'm not gonna leave you alone. I'm sure my mom won't mind if I babysat for a few nights.

DANA

(annoyed)

Oh, please!

DARREL

Yeah, which brings me to the good news.

DANA settles.

DARREL

This client we're trying to close...he has a huge vacation villa overlooking the Canyon. And he said if I made it down by tomorrow he would make it worth while and let us stay at the villa over the weekend, and make ourselves at home. Swimming pool, hot tub, private theater room. The works. He said his secretary could drop the keys off at the office in the morning. I just got to call him back tonight.

Darrel waits for a reaction from DANA but gets none.

DARREL

What do you think?

DANA

So what am I supposed to do for two nights while you're out doing your thang?

Julie lets out a little laugh that sounds like it came from an old woman.

DANA

Hang out here with grandma Gretchen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE
Hey, I'm on your side.

Some awkward tension passes.

DANA
Come on, dad.

DARREL ENTERS a step...

DARREL
There's one more surprise. Which may
interest you.

The girls perk up as if they are about hear a bedtime story.

WE DRAW IN on Darrel's FACE.

DARREL
(with warning)
The house is unique.
(he pauses for dramatic effect)
It's over a hundred years old, built
in 1907 by the grandson of Thomas
Edison...

More focused on DARREL...

DARREL
...the man of **LIGHT**.

The GIRLS almost laugh out loud with embarrassment, knowing
how hard Darrel is selling this.

DARREL
Oh come on.

JULIE
Okay, Mr. P. Sorry, sorry.
Go ahead.

DANA
Sorry, dad.

DARREL
As the story goes...he had a daughter
who was afraid of the dark so he built
three different light rooms for her to
explore and to play in. Rooms of light
that would chase away her fears and
provide comfort in her darkest hour.
And it did, almost by accident. It
cured her of those fears. Never again
to be tormented by the shadow. Then,
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL (CONT'D)
that little girl grew up and started
helping other kids with their own
fears of the dark, making a name for
herself in the process and one day
becoming a world renown psychologist
you may know as Dr. Linda. May.

DANA
(whispering in disbelief)
No way.

DARREL pulls away, letting this take effect.

JULIE
(excited)
Wait. I can come too, right?

DARREL
Of course.

Julie finally let out a little squeal, already thinking of
the possibilities.

DANA
Hold on. I haven't decided anything
yet.

JULIE
Are you kidding me. Pool party? Hello?
(gets closer to her ear, private)
And something else.

The girls give Darrel an invasive look.

DARREL
I'll let you two talk it out.

He leaves and closes the door.

JULIE gives her an uncontrollable excited look of
desperation.

DANA
Oh calm down. You do know what he was
doing right?

Beat. Julie acting dumb.

DANA
He was pouring it on really thick.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA (CONT'D)

Trying to get me to say yes.

JULIE

So?

DANA

He doesn't want to be in this house
any more than I do this weekend.

JULIE

What do you mean?

Dana sits on her bed. "As-a-matter-of-factly".

DANA

This weekend is the tenth anniversary
that my mother was killed. He doesn't
want to think about it. He wants to go
and do something fun to get his mind
off of it.

Julie's excitement changes to something solemn. Dana sees
that she stole her excitement.

DANA

Thomas Edison's grandson...
(imitating her dad in a low voice)
...built by the man of light. Come on.

They giggle again. The low tension is back up to excitement.

JULIE

(begging)

Oh, who cares who built it. Two night,
alone...This could be the two most
epic nights in your whole sad high
school career.

DANA not quite sure but pondering...

JULIE a little more fact forward.

JULIE

(whispers)

We're having the boys come over and
you're going to slumber like you've
never slumbered before.

DANA gets it and gives an embarrassing smile. Panic level
down to "2".

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE
Yeah! I know that look! Pucker!

DANA
(controlling her smile)
I haven't said yes yet. Let me think
about it. I'll call you tonight.

Julie un-puckers.

DANA looks away and takes a long breath of reservation.

JULIE'S smile fades completely as she quietly studies her
friend again...watching...with pity.

CUT TO:

FRONT ENTRY - MOMENTS LATER

Dana is saying goodbye to Julie at the opened front door. The
light from the porch is excessive, blocking the night from
entering.

JULIE
--Bye Mr. P.!
(whispering to Dana)
Boys. Think about it!

DANA
(whispering)
Bye!

DARREL (O.S.)
Bye Julie. Be good!

JULIE
(whispering to Dana)
Just say yes.

DANA
Go home.

JULIE
(as she's walking out, to Darrel:)
You know I can't!

Julie shuts the door, pauses to herself, then turns away.

CUT TO:

LIVING ROOM

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The room is bright. DARREL is sitting in his chair, reading a book, wearing transitional lens reading glasses.

DANA enters and sits on the couch adjacent to him.

Beat, glances at the PIZZA BOX. It is empty.

DANA
Good French food?

DARREL
Not too bad.

Awkward beat.

DARREL is beginning to smile from it.

DANA
That was a good story in there.

DARREL
What d'you mean?

DANA
Thomas Edison's grandson? The man of
light?
(beat)
I know what you were doing.

Darrel is half playing it straight.

DARREL
Yeah.

DANA
And that thing about Dr. May. That was
the cherry!

DARREL cracks a smile...

DARREL
Well, I may have made up the part
about Linda.

His eyes become serious, locking on to her's for validity.
Dana is caught in a credulous stare then breaks away.

DANA
Dad, I know you really want us to do
this but I don't know if I can right
now. It's too soon. Trust me, I'm
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA (CONT'D)
trying--

DARREL
No, I think it's time.

Darrel puts down his book and shaded reading glasses. Full attention.

DARREL
Honey, I think it's time for you to face your fears. You can't hide like this anymore. This world, out there, isn't going to wait on you. You have to get going.

Dana retorts with teenage aggression. Darrel was too strong.

DANA
And how about you?

DARREL
What do you mean?

DANA
What about you, dad? What are you waiting for you?

Darrel is slightly stunned.

DANA
What are you hiding from? You're always here, sitting in your chair, doing your puzzles or reading books all the time. You don't have a life.

The truth hurts.

DARREL
This is my life. I'm here to take care of you--

DANA
No. That's not what I want.

DARREL
What do you want from me?

DANA
I don't know. Maybe go out and find someone. Instead of doing this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL shies.

DANA

Is that why we stopped going to my therapy? You didn't want to see her anymore? Why? Why are you so afraid to move on?

DARREL

That has nothing to do with it.

DANA

Maybe... Okay, I admit. Maybe I didn't want you too before but now...I've changed my mind.

(beat)

I know she likes you, dad... But you never let her get close. Why?

DARREL bends a little. Impressed by his daughter's insight.

DARREL

Man. Am I on your couch now?

Dana crosses her arms, waiting...

Darrel is evading, tempted to pick up his book--

DANA

Why?

DARREL

I don't know... Maybe I'm--

DANA

Why won't you let her get close?

Her probes dive deeper into his pulp. They hit the mark and he heaves up some honesty.

DARREL faces his daughter, his guilt has returned.

DARREL

(solemn, softer)

Sweetheart, how can I protect her...when I couldn't even protect your own mother?

Dana moves to the floor, kneeling at his feet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA
Dad. Look at me.

He doesn't want to.

DANA
Look at me, dad.
(he finally does)
It. Is. Not. Your fault.

DARREL
I know...

DANA
No. It is not your fault.

Darrel's face softens with appreciation for her while holding back his deepest pain like all men do.

DARREL
I know, honey. And I appreciate you.
I'm getting there, okay. It's just taking time.

DANA
Face your fears.

Darrel almost laughs out loud. Then gives her a lengthy look.

DARREL
I will if you will.

DANA lets out a little bear growl. It's back on her. She goes back to the couch.

He hold his look on her.

DANA
Trust me, I'm trying, too, okay?
(beat, looks at him with an idea)
Two nights?

DARREL
(he realizes her motives)
You want to do just one night?

DANA
Can you?

Darrel takes a moment to think about it. Puts his glasses back on and picks up his book.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL

Alright. One night. I can come back
the following day and be here before
dark.

(grabbing at the phone)

Let me call him.

DANA springs up excited and lands on her dad hard with a big
hug and a hard kiss on his cheek then runs off down the
hallway...

DANA

I'm going to call Julie!

...as DARREL watches her vanish, a loving smile on his
face...then it turns into pity...then to guilt as he makes
the call.

CUT TO:

INT. DANA'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

19

The room is dark.

We are looking down on Dana from the ceiling's point of view.

She is in bed watching something in her VR goggles.

INSERT VR GOGGLES

IN SLOW MOTION

Epic, turquoise waves crash against the cliffs. Foamy water
sprays. SEAGULLS float in the air. CU of a seagull perched on
a rock in warm tranquility as its feathers ruffle in the
breeze.

BACK TO SCENE

A moment later, Dana takes off her goggles as if something
disturbed her and stares straight up at us. We SLOWLY ZOOM IN
on her, and as we do we find rising terror in her face.

The CAMERA STOPS. We hold onto her wild eyes. She is soaking
in the darkness all around her with all she has, trying to
fight it. She is trying to face her--

We hear a little NOISE off screen, sorta like a small voice.
Dana, slowly, with daring, looks in the direction of the

CLOSET DOORS...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

...we hear her get out of bed and soon arrive at the doors.

Another COO coming from inside the closet, like muffled giggling.

DANA is frozen stiff, standing in front of us. Panic level "4".

She somehow forces both hands up to open the two doors but her hands stop just inches from the knobs.

LITTLE GIRL'S VOICE

(soft)

Mommy...

Her breathing heavies. Panic level "5"! She is barely able to keep the screams inside her chest.

LITTLE GIRL'S VOICE

I'm waiting for you, mommy. Come and find me.

DANA holds still, facing the doors and shaking...she can't do it. She slowly starts to fall away, backing up towards her bed. She is completely terrified.

LITTLE GIRL'S VOICE

(fading)

Mommy, don't go. I'm waiting for you in the dark...

DANA manages to crawl into bed with what little strength she has left and looks back at the closet doors again.

The DOORS remain closed in the *complete darkness, still and silent.*

From the ceiling's POV we watch Dana look upwards and face us. Eyes wild. Internal struggle...She waits a second, fighting her fears...seeing how long she can take it.

Suddenly, she puts on her VR goggles in a flash and lets go of a held breath as we hear the soft coos from nearby seagulls play.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. TRUCK - MORNING

20

Darrel is driving Dana and Julie to the villa. A song is playing on the radio by SOHN called "Falling".

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE is sitting in the front seat, the "mom" seat, putting on makeup.

DANA is comfortable sitting alone in the back, away from any attention. She looks up in the sky through her window, finding the morning sun. Safety in the bright light. Then she looks down at her phone, counting the hours left until darkness. It reads: "8:20". Panic level "2".

Darrel finds her in the REAR VIEW MIRROR.

DARREL

When we get there I'll take a quick
tour with you guys before heading to
the airport then--

JULIE

Girls.

He gives her a curious look.

JULIE

We're not guys, Mr. P., we're girls.

Darrel whimsically shakes it off as we hear a little snort from the back--Dana trying to hide a laugh.

JULIE

Yeah!
(turning around)
There's my girl!

DANA gives a modest smile. Julie gruff at her "natural" look.

JULIE

Ugh! I hope you brought your makeup.

DANA'S EYES bug at Julie's near slip.

DARREL

Why do you guys--
(off Julie's look)
--girls, need makeup for?

Julie pulls out her phone...

JULIE

Well, you know us girls, Mr. P...

She aims her camera phone at Dana who shies.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE
(vis: Dana)
Smile.

Dana give an embarrassing half smile.

The CHORUS of the song hits the part when the singer repeats the word "falling" as Julie pushes a button on her phone..

JULIE
...we have to look our best.

...and the camera repeats a BLINDING, STROBING FLASH like it's malfunctioning. Dana shields her eyes.

JULIE
Dang it. I seriously need to get a new phone.

Dana looks back to the front and Julie is strangely facing forward without a sound.

She darts at her phone and it reads: "8:30". This confuses Dana and makes her nervous. Panic level "3".

EXT. VILLA - FRONT GATE - LATER

21

ANGLE ON the truck pulling up and stopping.

OUTSIDE OF TRUCK

Darrel's window goes down.

DARREL
I hope this works.

He looks at a small piece of paper and pushes some buttons on the keypad. The GATE swings open.

EXT. VILLA - DRIVEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

22

ANGLE ON the truck slowly rolling up to the front.

INSIDE TRUCK

The girls are utterly amazed at the size of this house. Fit for royalty.

DARREL
Wow, girls. What d'you think?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Julie is awe struck. Her mind is racing with devilish possibilities.

Some COASTAL FOG ROLLS UP, shading the sunlight.

DANA is apprehensive.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLA - FRONT DOOR - LATER

23

Darrel inserts a GOLDEN KEY and the door releases.

INT. VILLA - FRONT ENTRY - CONTINUOUS

24

The door pushes open and we see Darrel and the girls with their sleeping bags standing small in front of a large door frame. After a beat of timidity they enter.

CUT TO:

FRONT ENTRY - SECONDS LATER

The SLEEPING BAGS plop on the floor. They are an eyesore to this sophisticated Italian designed home, modernized with all the state of the art features.

We follow the GIRLS into the

GREAT ROOM

where giant floor to ceiling windows create a grandiose view overlooking the Canyon. Several plush couches divide the space into separate sections adorned with extra chairs throughout. A media cabinet set as a centerpiece where a TV would rise from...

DANA has had her attention on something else though, looking up towards the ceiling.

Adjacent, we are lead into the

DINING ROOM

which is decorated with a long, polished table set with eight high back chairs. Curio cabinets line the wall. And a GRANDFATHER CLOCK at its post in a corner.

The GIRLS quickly walk into the nearby

KITCHEN

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

to explore all the amenities, loosely followed by Darrel, existing only in the forgotten background.

JULIE opens the SUB-ZERO and looks inside and is enthralled of what she sees.

JULIE

Oh, I'm making us a gourmet dinner tonight.

DANA stands near an island where a block of knives are placed and tentatively slides out a large CHEF KNIFE from its slot. SHARP REFLECTIONS catches her eyes and she instinctively squints but holds a solid stare back into its mirrored reflection...*remembering something...*

...the memory quietly frightens her and she quickly slides it back into place.

DARREL falls into frame--

The GIRLS find him.

DARREL

So, what do you think?

JULIE

This is so awesome.

DANA

Where's all the lights?

DARREL

Honey, we've already talked about this. Remember? This isn't like our house--

Panic level "3".

DANA

I know! I don't understand why I couldn't wait for you at home--

DARREL

Dana, you already know why. You can't hide in that house forever.

(regretful, softer)

We both can't. Right? We need this. Besides, it shouldn't be that bad. Julie's here and you got your phone, and goggles with you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE

That's right. We're gonna have too much fun to worry about anything anyway.

Dana gives them an appeasing smirk.

DARREL

Okay, good.

(beat)

Look, I have to get going if I wanna catch my plane. I can't be late. I'll call you tonight.

He gives Dana a "dad" hug.

DARREL

(only Dana can hear)

You're gonna be okay. *After this weekend you're going to be a completely different person. I promise.*

Tighter hug.

Darrel heads for the front door...

DARREL

You guys have fun. Don't break anything. And don't let anyone in!

JULIE

(smiling at Dana)

Okay Mr. P.

Darrel disappears and we hear the front door close.

JULIE turns to Dana in great anticipation.

JULIE

Change your clothes and meet me by the pool.

DANA

(timid)

Okay.

Julie runs to get her bags in the front entry...

JULIE

Let's get this party started! Whoo!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Her voice echoes throughout the great room as Dana turns and looks out one of the kitchen windows and finds the TRUCK quickly driving off as if there's something more pressing on Darrel's mind.

DANA takes in a deep breath. No turning back now.

Her gaze shifts from the vanishing truck to the sky. She looks back at her phone. It reads: "9:15".

EXT. POOL - EARLY AFTERNOON

25

The SUN is bright and hot. DANA looks back at her phone from the sky. It reads: "10:55".

JULIE

How many times are you going to do
that today?

JULIE is a doll to look at in her bathing suit, red lips and Hollywood sunglasses. She is oiled up, laying on a pool chair soaking up rays just as Dana is, right beside her, though Dana's bathing suit is less revealing.

DANA puts her phone away.

JULIE

You can't embarrass me tonight.

DANA

I really wish they weren't coming.

No reaction from Julie.

DANA

Can't we just tell them we're not
allowed to have anyone over?

JULIE

I saw you two that day. You guys had
chemistry. It's all gonna be fine--

Julie's phone RINGS.

JULIE

Speaking of which.
(Golden Age style)
Well, hello darling.

Julie's VOICE fades in the background as we focus on DANA. She is nervous. Dealing with her own universe. She glances up

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

at the sun again then quickly back at Julie as if not to get caught...

JULIE

...it's 0-3-0-6. Okay, cool. We'll be waiting for you at the pool. Oh wait, I have to unlock the door. Yeah. Okay. Bye.

She hangs up and looks at herself in the phone's camera.

DANA

How did you know the code?

JULIE is caught but quickly plays it cool.

JULIE

I was peeking over your dad's shoulder when he was punching it in at the gate.

DANA looks at her with near resentment.

CUT TO:

POOL - MOMENTS LATER

JULIE is reapplying her sun tan lotion as Dana is reading a book.

The DOORBELL RINGS in the distance.

JULIE

(excited)

Ooh, I wonder who that can be?

Dana gives a polite smile.

JULIE

(to her imaginary butler:)

Oh, Charlie. Be a lad and get the door, would you?

DANA smiles in jest. Julie knows how to break her ice.

JULIE flies off her pool chair at Dana's "by-your-leave" and exits inside to get the door. She gives a little teenager howl of sexuality on her way in and...

JULIE

Coming!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA quickly grabs her phone to catch the time. It reads: "11:35". She looks up towards the sun, lets out a nervous breath. Time slipping away, always heading towards the ever pending **night**.

We can hear the shutting of the front door in the distance, then RISING VOICES. DANA turns her head towards the french doors at the pool's entrance and nervously waits...PANIC LEVEL "3". The voices are getting closer, sounding like boy voices, laughing like fools, like buzzed douches.

JULIE, CHRIS and ALEX enter through the french doors and make their way to Dana, getting closer, "clown smiles" painted on their faces. A six pack, already missing two cans, dangle in one of Chris' hands, his other draped around Julie's shoulder.

20 feet...10 feet...breathing deeper...5 feet and then... Alex rudely drops a RED ICE CHEST at her feet making it the perfect explanation point to their idiotic entrance.

ALEX

What's up?

DANA finds Julie and Chris already in full flirtatious mode behind Alex then looks back at him.

DANA

(polite)

Hi. Alex right?

ALEX

(excited she remembered)

Yeah! That's right.

A HIGH PITCH SCREAM comes from behind him. Dana quickly peers around and finds Chris carrying Julie over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes, heading for the water. She's begging for him to stop with uncontrolled laughter. Seconds later they tumble into the pool and SPLASH! Water sprays Dana.

ALEX turns to her with an encouraging smile as if her wants to do something playful with her. After an awkward and embarrassing beat...DANA puts in her ear buds and reopens her book. ALEX'S ego is slightly hurt, nobody rejects Iceman.

ALEX opens the cooler and snatches out another beer, roughly closes the lid and plops down on a pool chair next to her. He pops the tap and takes a loud swig while diverting his attention at the LOVE BIRDS already making their way to the pool's edge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Julie and Chris recognize the discord between the two and abandon their silliness for a second. ALEX mockingly raises his beer can to them in a dreary toast, "great start!".

CLOSE IN ON a perturbed JULIE who is waiting for eye contact from Dana...and she gets it...a low glance that says, "Screw your chemistry.".

CUT TO:

POOL - MOMENTS LATER

All four are sitting in their pool chairs, waiting out the high tension.

ALEX is looking back and then away from Dana in broken confidence. He finally finds his nerve, reaches in the cooler and pulls out a beer can--

ALEX
(vis: Dana)
Would you like one?

After a beat...with a remorseful look--

DANA
You got anything else in there?

JULIE suddenly perks up. Tension gone.

JULIE
Hey! I just got a wonderful idea.
Since the boys clearly have mistaken
this classy party for a beach bumner
one how about we find a couple chic
bottles of wine to start with. I bet
there's a cellar somewhere in this
house.

DANA quickly looks towards the open french doors and peers into the SHADOWED SPACE inside and recoils from the sight.

JULIE notices her hesitation and darts a cue at Alex. He gets it.

ALEX
You know what? Yeah.
(vis: Dana)
You wanna go on a search hunt?

DANA can't come up with any excuses. Alex stands up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX
Come on. It'll be fun.
(vis: love birds)
What'ya guys prefer? Red or white?

JULIE
(diva)
Look at me. What do you think?

ALEX
(unsure)
Uh...white?

JULIE
Ugh! So racial!

CHRIS
Again. Douche.

JULIE cracks a smile to Dana. Dana gets up, much to Alex's delight.

DANA
Trust me, she's all white.

Everybody laughs! Things are loosening up.

Alex and Dana move through the french doors and disappear into the shadowed space as JULIE carefully watches them.

CHRIS gives Julie a "I want you now" look.

JULIE
No! Down boy. Not until nighttime.

INT. VILLA - LATER

26

A HALLWAY

Dana and Alex are semi-looking for the cellar, if there even is one, while each striving for their own motives-in complete awkwardness...Alex-trying to find a way to score like all jocks do but can't find the opportunity and Dana-making sure her chastity belt is double-locked, laced with razor-wire as she secretly bottles up her growing phobia.

ALEX'S frustrations are growing with each passing second as alone time with a girl is escaping him.

DANA is walking disconnected as she is buried into her bright, glowing phone. To ego-hurt-Alex this looks like a

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

sign of ignoring him but it is actually her maintaining her fears as she absorbs the light into her eyes.

ALEX notices some FRAMES on the walls and stops.

ALEX

Man, check this out.

Dana instinctively stops and finds the frames. Something gets her attention and she looks closer at one of them.

INSERT FRAME

A well known black and white photograph of Thomas Edison standing next to a giant incandescent light bulb and at the bottom we find a golden tab with an inscription which reads: "Inventor, Showman and Celebrity".

ALEX (O.S.)

Look at all these.

BACK TO SCENE

Dana looks down the walls of the hallway and WE SEE about a dozen more frames of Edison.

ALEX

What's the deal with this guy?

(turns to her)

I mean, why do these people have his picture up all over the place like this?

Dana has her suspicions but stays quiet. They continue down the hall until they come to a LONE DOOR. Alex stops next to it.

ALEX

(to the door)

And what are you hiding?

He twists the copper knob, CLICK. The door creaks open revealing a PITCH BLACK VOID. The darkness hits Dana like a silent sledgehammer...she, controlling her pounding heart.

ALEX reaches his hand inside the black void, feeling the side wall for something then, CLICK and a low ZING of old electricity warming up. With the rising zing, four, very old, "Edison era" looking light bulbs, carelessly hanging on the left wall, light up, revealing a DARK STAIRCASE that leads to a lower room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Panic level: "4".

ALEX

Bingo! We found it!

Alex races down the stairs...leaving Dana alone in trepidation.

ALEX (O.S.)

Let's go!

He vanishes...silent and still. DANA leans over the edge to look down when just then Alex suddenly reappears from the bottom below. He is completely at ease in this dark pit like a demon.

ALEX

Come on, what are you waiting for?

He disappears back into the darkness.

DANA'S POV

The STEPS in the cellar may as well be the very steps that lead to hell itself.

CUT TO:

CELLAR - STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

DANA is gingerly walking down the stairs with her bright cell phone screen lighting the way, facing her fears head on.

DANA reaches the bottom and looks to her right where she last saw Alex disappear to just as he finds a string in the darkness to pull, CLICK. A single bright bulb, modern, fluorescent, lights up the space and we see the prize! Hundreds and hundreds of wine bottles of all shapes and sizes resting in wooden shelves hidden behind dust and cobwebs.

ALEX

Jackpot!

Alex moves to the shelves and starts searching. DANA looks back up the stairs towards the light. Tempted to run.

ALEX

Man, these bottles are probably just as old as that light guy is.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA
(nervous)
Can we hurry?

This is the first uncontrolled glimmer into her phobia that is being revealed to Alex. He turns around and laughs it off.

ALEX
(joking)
Why? You afraid of the dark?

Panic level: "5"! DANA'S eyes dart to a dark corner.

ALEX
Aw, come on. There's no Boogeyman down here.

His face suddenly turns somber and he turns back around to study the bottles, pulls one out and looks at it as if he's actually more well read than he leads on to be...

ALEX
(quieter, practiced vulnerability)
Or, maybe, I'm the Boogeyman, I don't know.

DANA is caught off guard a little and looks at him with new question, slight sympathy, then looks back up the stairs towards the light, then back at Alex. Decision time...He's forgiven.

She carefully walks towards him and stops at his SIDE. She joins in with the wine search. His plan is working and with a little grin--

ALEX
Honestly, I don't even know what I'm doing. I guess I'm just good at pretending.

He gives her a little flirtatious look. This loosens her chastity belt up a bit.

Dana takes the bottle from him like he's a dope, reads the label, shoves it back and takes out another one. She blows the dust off and confirms her decision then...

DANA
Here. We can start with this...

SLOW ZOOM IN on the backs of the two from an unseen "ghost's"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POV.

She hands him the bottle and he tries to pronounce it but becomes more stupid by the second.

DANA
Pinot Grigio.

Then she turns around and hands him another.

DANA
And this is a 2003 Chateau Margaux
from France, easily a \$1.000 bottle.

ALEX takes it with a little sparkle in his eye and a certain hope. She feels it but not quite ready and shies away. Then she realizes that she has unwittingly gotten closer to him while looking at the bottles and turns uncomfortable. She feels trapped, played...

She looks past him towards the DIM LIGHT from the running staircase. She wants to escape but nowhere to go. Panic rises.

DANA
Maybe we should go. We found the wine.

ALEX
(hungry look in his eye)
What's the hurry?

He puts the bottles on the ground then moves a little closer to her, EYES raking all over her.

DANA
Umm, Alex, the party's upstairs.

His hand slides under her shirt some.

ALEX
Yeah. But I was thinking we could have
our own little party down here. You
know they're already having their own
up there.

His hand goes higher. She is doomed! Panic level instantly rises to "5"! Breathing heavier...

ALEX
Yeah. That's hot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JERK! How is she going to escape?

He moves in for the douche glory just as we hear a little NOISE from that **DARK CORNER!**

ALEX almost jumps out of his skin, slimy hand quickly back at his own as he slowly turns his head towards the corner...Quiet...

He moves a curious step towards the corner--

--Dana flies out, running up the stairs, he chasing her a few steps...

ALEX

Dana!

...then stops. She has escaped him once again!

Quiet beat. Then another RATTLE and a CLICK behind him.

ALEX instantly turns around towards the DARK CORNER...A SLAP then another CLICK! He is not alone! Now, he's the one who's breathing heavy.

Not to be punked, he daringly makes a cool way to the shadowed corner and shines his phone's flashlight in it and as we come closer to the spot we start to see a small trap door light up and a PURPLE blanket laid haphazardly on the dirty floor. After a moment of contemplating, he exits, picking up the two dusty bottles on his way, pulls the dangling string to the fluorescent bulb and CLICK the light goes off then runs up the stairs after Dana, and down the hall.

WE are left in the dark cellar for an uncomfortable amount of time, SLOWLY ZOOMING IN to that dark corner that is barely illuminated from the light upstairs...

INT. VILLA - GUEST ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

27

We are following close behind Dana as she is racing towards the pool area. She is acting like the Boogeyman is chasing her and is near a full-out cry but courageously holding it in.

We are closely following the dark outline of her back from a "ghost's" POV which is just visible to us in this low-lit room, but in front of her, just beyond the closed french doors, lies the radiant glow of outside. He sanctuary. She is running towards it. As we are getting closer to the glass

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

doors we notice Julie and Chris sitting in their chairs freely basking in this warm radiance.

REVERSE DANA FROM JULIE'S POV

DANA crashes through the doors, making a slamming sound. She has her hands over her mouth trying to keep her panic inside. JULIE finds her and is shocked.

JULIE
Dana!? Sweetheart?
(quickly getting up)
What happened--

Julie catches her and Dana almost collapses in her arms. She can barely form words.

DANA
I-I wanna go. I don't want to be here
anymore.

JULIE
Honey, calm down. What happened?

DANA
No! You got to take me home, now!
Please. I want to leave--

DANA suddenly witnesses a HOMELESS MAN in a hoodie scurrying away down the drive like he is running for his life. Dana freezes!

JULIE
What's going on?

They both turn around to a sound coming from the FRENCH DOORS and find Alex rushing through them holding the two bottles Dana had picked earlier and comes to a slow stop as his eyes meet their's. He acts like the bully who was just ratted on to the teacher. He has a look of predatory guilt.

JULIE turns and finds Dana's teary eyes of fear and victimization.

CHRIS
Dude, what took so long? Oh wait...I
know...yeah!

ALEX finds a shaken Dana, locked into his stare. She's doing all she can to hide her faults. But he seems to feel something off in her. Something tragic. And sympathizes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX
Shut up, man.
(softer)
Nothing happened.

This calms Dana down a level, letting her to look again towards the drive...the homeless man is nowhere to be seen.

DANA looks up towards the sun. It is already past its zenith.
Hour hand now falling towards darkness.

OMINOUS MUSIC STARTS...

INT. VILLA - KITCHEN - NEAR DUSK

28

The OMINOUS MUSIC continues to play in the background, it's the ghost that is always there and a presence that continues to mount till the end of the story.

Julie, Chris and Alex are making the evening's dinner with Julie at the helm. There is a constant dud in the air despite everyone's forced smiles and jokes. Obviously this night has a more urgent motive beyond teenage ambitions.

CHRIS
Why does she stay out there like that?
What is she waiting for?

JULIE is a little agitated with his lack of empathy.

ALEX glances up at her, curious himself.

JULIE
Make those pieces smaller. And don't touch anything.

Julie exits as CHRIS looks down at his stupid attempt of making a salad.

ALEX
One day that mouth of yours is going to get you in trouble. You know that?

Alex continues to chop an onion with the knife Dana pulled out earlier. SHARP REFLECTIONS runs down the knife.

EXT. VILLA - POOL - MOMENTS LATER

29

The SUN is barely hovering over the tops of trees...SHADOWS already forming nearby.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dana is sitting upright near the pool's edge, arms wrapped around knees that are pressed hard against her chest. She is staring into the SHARP REFLECTIONS coming from the ripples in the pool. These mesmerizing reflections dance over her FACE.

JULIE arrives at her side, kneels down. Dana doesn't budge. In a trance. CLOSE IN ON the side of DANA'S face, reflections playing off her features. We're trying to find her expression but can't.

JULIE (O.S.)

Hey. You don't want to be *falling* in,
do ya?

DANA suddenly comes to at the word "falling", turns and finds her 'mom' at her side. Dana has a comatose look about her. A dazed look. Startles JULIE.

DANA

(whispering)

Something's wrong. I can feel it.

JULIE

Oh, honey. Come now. Let's go eat.

Julie stands back up to lead her away but Dana doesn't budge.

She looks back at Dana...with a hidden study on her...trying to find her face but it is still uncertain.

DANA

I can feel my soul falling away.

JULIE makes a slight move to find her face...

DANA

I don't even recognize myself anymore.

...ANGLE ON Dana's face...we see it is slightly unrecognizable to us.

CUT TO:

POOL - MOMENTS LATER

The SUN finally slides behind the tops of the trees, letting the shadows form where they may.

JULIE

(picking Dana up)

Come on. Let's get you inside. *Night*
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE (CONT'D)
is falling.

Julie has Dana in her arms, helping her inside the villa as the growing SHADOWS continue to creep behind them, slithering over their pool chairs and empty beer cans.

INT. VILLA - DINING ROOM - LATER

30

Alex, Chris and Dana are sitting at a well provisioned dining table, set with multiple side dishes, bread and salad, waiting for Julie to bring out the main dish. The table is set with the finest china, silver flatware and crystal glassware. Dinner fit for a Laguna king.

Along the walls are curio cabinets filled with more fine china and crystal. Standing at one corner is a GIANT GRANDFATHER CLOCK. On the opposite wall hangs more FRAMES holding photographs of Thomas Edison.

DANA is looking at the frames with more intensity. Her father's story is becoming more credible.

ALEX notices her. She quickly tears her eyes away out of embarrassment and takes a sip the Chateau Margaux that fills each of their glasses.

In walks JULIE, wearing a cute apron, carrying a beautiful piece of roasted meat on a silver platter. She places it in the center of the table with "Oohs and Awes" then takes her seat.

Everyone looks around at all the fine indulgences of the wealthy...clearly they are out of place with their casual street wear and public school system education instead of something more formal and Ivy League intelligence.

They all look at one another for an intimidating moment...then simultaneously bust up laughing. They know how ridiculous this is but they are going to enjoy it anyway.

JULIE
 (proud)
 Bon appetite!

Of course the boys jump right in like two hyenas and makes a mess of things...

DANA waits and takes a quick look at the time on the grandfather clock. It reads: "7:20". After a moment of feeling like she's being watched she breaks away from her

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

anxiety and starts to help herself to the feast.

JULIE notices this and has been eyeing Dana as the CLANKS and CLATTERS from the boys' consumption fiasco echo-fades into the background letting the OMINOUS MUSIC RISES BACK UP...then LOUDER...Dana, still feeling prying eyes watching her, suddenly DARTS HER EYES RIGHT INTO JULIE'S...then--

SMASH CUT TO:

DINING ROOM - LATER

In a flash the four bodies at the table have instantly vanished in DEAD SILENCE. What we see at the table is the aftermath of a famished teenage feast, fuel intake that will sustain them for the night.

We hear a distant sound of young voices coming from the other room.

The STEADICAM starts to move as if it is someone's POV, moving from the table...to the open door and then into the adjacent

GREAT ROOM

where the POV finds two teenage couples sitting on two separate couches. As the POV stalks closer to them we see that one couple is snuggling under a single blanket in darkened privacy while the other couple is less engaged--the boy holding the blanket in his lap and the young lady, sitting a good comfortable foot away from him under a brightly lit lamp. As the POV draws closer to them the lone young lady quickly looks up in the straight direction of the "POV ghost".

REVERSE DANA'S POV towards the unseen apparition. There is nothing there, except for the symbolism of Dana's "ghost" that is following her. It is, in fact, her subconscious drawing closer to her conscious, ready to share all the hidden and horrific memories of her mother's murder.

DANA sees nothing and slowly pulls away but catches a watchful eye from Julie. Panic level, "4".

CUT TO:

GREAT ROOM - LATER

The couples are watching a scary movie in bright light.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

On the TV plays a memorable and nerve-wracking scene from "When a Stranger Calls".

ALEX peeks over in envy at the other couple...smooching and giggling under the blanket.

JULIE

No, baby. I said not until tonight.

CHRIS

But it is night.

Julie giggles.

In a quiet panic DANA secretly looks at her phone behind her body. It reads: "8:25". She hit's panic level, "5" and starts to breath heavy. Time has slipped away. How could she be so careless. She needs her VR goggles. Dana is about to get up...

ALEX

Hey!

DANA darts at him as if she's about to get violated.

ALEX

(nodding to the lamp)

You mind if we turn this off? It's a little bright, don't you think?

DANA

No! It stays on!

Alex falls back, comically perplexed and a little offended. Then, suddenly, out of patience.

ALEX

(to no one in particular)

Dude! Seriously.

Julie comes up from under the blanket. Then Chris follows...

JULIE

What's going on over there?

CHRIS

Yeah, bro. You mad?

Chris laughs a bit at his joke. Julie slaps his leg.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE
(playful)
Stop it. That's not funny.

Chris keeps laughing to himself.

CHRIS
Iceman can't score.

ALEX
Look at her man. She's freaking out!
She been freaking out every since we
got here. I mean, who watches a movie
with all the lights on anyway?

DANA is getting closer to losing control. Julie sees this.

JULIE
Alright. That's it. We're trading
partners.

Julie reaches up and turns on her lamp. Light kills the mood.

CHRIS
Aw, com'on babe.

JULIE
No! You can share a blanket with Mr.
Wonderful over there.
(vis: Dana)
Come on, sweetheart. Come over here.

Julie rips the blanket off of a bummed out Chris as Dana
gladly makes her way to Julie's couch.

CHRIS plops down right next to Alex and just stares at him to
get a rise...then reaches up and turns out the lamp and pulls
the blanket over the both of them and attempts to lay his
head on Alex's shoulder.

ALEX
Stop it, man! It's not funny.

Julie laughs while holding Dana. Panic level drops.

ALEX looks at Dana like she's a lost cause as "mom" comforts
her. He then throws the blanket off of him, obviously
sexually frustrated and crosses his arms.

ALEX
This party blows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRIS reacts suddenly--

CHRIS
(vis: Alex)
Freak.

ALEX
Convict!

Alex is about to slug Chris when everyone hears a CRASH of trash cans outside.

JULIE
What's that?

Nervous beat...

ALEX
You guys stay here. We'll check it out.

Alex still SLUGS Chris--

ALEX
Come on.

KITCHEN BACK DOOR - LATE DUSK, MOMENTS LATER

ALEX opens the door and we see the same HOMELESS MAN from earlier in a hoodie rummaging through trash cans on a side drive near the garage.

The SKY is mostly dark-blue with a fading light-blue shade hovering out in the west.

CLINKS and CLANKS!

ALEX
Hey! What are you doin'? Get outta here!

The HOMELESS MAN ignores him as if he's deaf or doesn't care.

CHRIS
Hey, you deaf, bro! We said get out of here!

Still, he acts undisturbed. Trash flying all over the place.

ALEX
Look at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX (CONT'D)
(vis: homeless man)
I know you can hear me!

CHRIS
Yeah! You freakin bum!

Suddenly, the HOMELESS MAN stops and looks up and death stares the boys for a tense second then goes back to digging in the trash as though he's indifferent to them.

ALEX
Really..? Oh, you're a dead man!

Alex makes a move then--

CHRIS
Wait a minute.

CHRIS picks up a nearby iron rod meant for a lawn decoration and holds its heavy weight in his hand like he means it for an instant weapon.

ALEX
Hold on. Let me get something, too.

Alex starts back inside the

KITCHEN

as Chris is already making his way towards the homeless man.

ALEX
Dude, hold on!

ALEX feverishly scans the kitchen for a ready type weapon. He takes out a skinny knife from the butcher block, but it's too small. He throws it down and looks over the dirty dishes and finds it, lying in the light over the sink. Dana's glimmering CHEF KNIFE! He quickly grabs it and runs through the back door and onto the

OUTSIDE DRIVEWAY

where he expects to see Chris wailing on the homeless man but instead the two are nowhere to be seen. It's dead quiet.

ALEX stops near the trash cans and quickly searches for Chris.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX
(hard whispers)
Chris? Chris! Where are you, man?

He looks down and notices the IRON ROD lying on the concrete, then a WET SPOT nearby. He hesitates then bends down and touches the spot with his fingers. It is BLOOD! Alex thinks the worst.

GREAT ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

ALEX comes rushing in, carrying the KNIFE in his hands, panic on his face. He's quickly looking in nearby rooms, behind quiet walls and shadowed doorways.

The girls are startled to full alert.

Alex goes to the

FRONT DOOR

and opens it, pokes his head out, looking left then right...

ALEX
(into the darkness)
Chris...! Chris!

JULIE (O.S.)
Alex. What are you doing?

...SLAMS the door! Then comes back to the
GREAT ROOM.

ALEX
(manic)
Have you seen Chris? Has he come
through here?

JULIE
No. He's not with you?

ALEX
No, he's not with me!

DANA
(getting nervous)
What's going on?

Alex is in deep thought and pacing like he believes his constant movement is helping somehow. He can't stay still for

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

a single solitary second.

JULIE

Alex. Alex!

ALEX

(still slightly pacing,
preoccupied)

Oh man, we are in so much trouble!

JULIE

Calm down. What are you talking about?

ALEX

Your stupid boyfriend went off again!
(trying to focus)

That homeless guy was outside going
through the trash...that sound we
heard a second ago...and we were just
going to scare him off, you know, then--

JULIE

What homeless guy?

ALEX

(pointing to Dana with the knife)

She knows!

(vis: Dana)

Tell her.

Julie turns to Dana.

DANA

(nervous, confused)

In the cellar. We heard a noise coming
from a corner. It looked like someone
may have been sleeping down there.

(shy beat)

I saw him running from the property,
earlier, when I came back to the pool.

JULIE

(nervous laughter)

What are you saying? There's somebody
else in the house?

DANA has a terrorized look on her face.

ALEX makes a sign in the affirmative while calming his
erratic pacing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE
(frantic)
Oh, no. No! This can't be happening.
Okay, let me think...

DANA jumps up and runs to the kitchen...

JULIE
Dana, wait!

Julie starts after Dana...

ALEX
And now he probably has Chris.

...but stops and is suddenly shaken.

JULIE
What do you mean?

ALEX
(after a beat)
I found some blood on the ground.

JULIE
Who's blood!?

ALEX
Now, how would I know!
(beat)
Chris found an iron rod outside...to
protect himself...I found it next to
the blood.
(starting to pace again)
Now, I can't find Chris anywhere.

KITCHEN BACK DOOR - CONTINUOUS

DANA SLINGS open the door, takes a half step outside and
instantly looks towards the horizon...

SHE GASPS in horror as she finds the last of the light blue
sky toward the west turning BLACK! Point of no return.

She is tempted to run but slinks back inside, strength
sapped, holding her chest tight...then slowly closes the door
on the harrowing night without even looking at the blood on
the ground and collapses to the kitchen floor in complete
despair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE (O.S.)

Dana!

(getting closer)

Dana!

DANA is nearly hyperventilating, her chest heaving in pain. That one major attack is getting closer...

JULIE comes flying in, lands hard next to her with a BRIGHT FLASHLIGHT in hand. DANA quickly strips it from Julie's hands before she can even settle in next to her and aims the light directly into her pupils.

ALEX casually enters the kitchen, knife still in hand. He is trying to comprehend what he's looking at--a little girl staring directly into a flashlight! He SNICKERS.

Julie looks up...

JULIE

(snickers back)

What are you looking at?

ALEX

(comically perplexed)

What is this? Seriously, what's wrong with her?

The bright flashlight has calmed DANA some...

JULIE

You wouldn't understand.

ALEX

Fine. I'm going to look for Chris at the other end of the house.

Heads off.

JULIE

(nervous)

Wait!

ALEX

And I have a pretty good idea where he's at, too.

Alex and Dana's eyes meet with a certain unsettling.

JULIE

No. Are you crazy? We have to get out
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE (CONT'D)

of here!

(beat)

I need to get her back home. She can't handle this anymore.

ALEX

What are you talking about?

JULIE

Her mind can't handle this, okay?

ALEX

(impatient)

What?

Julie hesitates then...

JULIE

It's called Nyctophobia. She has an extreme fear of the dark. Only about one in three million have it.

Dana is coming out of her panic attack and draws the flashlight away from her face with a little embarrassment.

JULIE

She was having a panic attack...and if she has a really bad one then her mind will permanently be damaged. Don't you get it? She will be a completely different person. Forever. No coming back. Trust me, it's a really big deal. So, we need to keep her as calm as possible so that won't happen.

ALEX starts his pacing again.

ALEX

This is nuts!

JULIE

So, lets go.

ALEX

We can't! That's Chris' car! He has the keys.

DANA

What? No. We have to leave, now. I can't stay here. Please.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alex stops his pacing some then sympathizes Dana...then gives Julie a determined look.

ALEX

Alright. For now just stay put. Maybe get back to the living room, near the lights, out in the open. Stay out of the shadows. Don't go anywhere.

He starts to move out...

JULIE

And what are you going to do?

Without stopping...

ALEX

(cynical)

I'm going to get your stupid boyfriend back. We're leaving this place.

Alex walks out of sight.

Julie helps Dana up...

JULIE

Come on, let's get in the other room.

They start to go but stop.

JULIE

Wait.

Julie locks the kitchen door with a SNAP.

OMINOUS MUSIC RISES UP...

EXT. CALIFORNIA COAST - CONTINUOUS

31

The last of the dark blue HORIZON surrenders to black...

INT. VILLA - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

32

ALEX arrives in front of the

CELLAR DOOR.

He looks left and right then refaces the door with forced determination. He tightens his grip on the knife then waits a

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

tense beat...

GREAT ROOM - JULIE/DANA - LATER

Dana is lying on a couch with her head in Julie's lap. They continue to watch the movie, "When A Stranger Calls" on the TV in front of them. Julie is stroking Dana's hair to comfort her.

ON TV SCREEN

As the movie plays we notice that the picture is starting to flicker...glitching with a superfast flash of light, once every twenty-four frames. Barely noticeable. Subliminal.

JULIE/DANA

DANA is almost transfixed on the image in front of her. Like she is drawn into it somehow.

DANA

You ever feel like you're losing
control?

Julie's eyes instinctively drop down to Dana then back to the TV. She is waiting for something.

CELLAR - CONTINUOUS

We are in the same spot where we last left this room earlier. We hear a slow CREAKING of a door opening and look up towards the staircase where we find a descending shadow crossing the light above.

JULIE/DANA - CONTINUOUS

CU of Dana's FACE. We barely make out the quick flickering from the TV screen hitting her eyes.

DANA

Maybe that's what they mean when they
talk about being possessed. Like your
soul is being replaced with something
else...

Julie looks back up from Dana to the TV SCREEN. BRIGHT FLASHES increase to five frames per second.

DANA

...with something bad.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OMINOUS MUSIC RISING TO FULL...

CELLAR - CONTINUOUS

Alex reaches the bottom step and knows exactly where to search but hesitates. The DARKNESS is imposing. *Silent and still.*

JULIE/DANA - CONTINUOUS

JULIE is staring at the TV screen, waiting for something in particular. The flickering light pulsates more frequently on her face. She starts to slow her stroking of Dana's hair...

ON TV SCREEN

The FLICKERING is becoming more obvious as the movie comes to the part when the police is on the phone with the babysitter, "The call is from inside the house."

JULIE/DANA

...and moves her FINGERS from Dana's hair to the center of her forehead. They begin a circular motion...

DANA'S FACE is clearly being bombarded with this flickering. Her heavy eyelids lazily blink a time or two as Julie's soothing massage relaxes her.

CELLAR - CONTINUOUS

Alex pulls the string to the fluorescent light bulb but, POP! For a microsecond the cellar is exposed in bright light as the bulb explodes with a flash and we think we may have seen someone else down here.

JULIE/DANA - CONTINUOUS

Julie's fingers continue to rub Dana's forehead in a steady circular motion as Dana's heavy eyelids continue to lazily fall close then open.

DANA

They never caught him, you know.

JULIE puts on her Hollywood chic sunglasses as the BRIGHT FLICKERING steadily increases to seven frames per second, becoming a slow strobe on her face.

JULIE

Who?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CELLAR - CONTINUOUS

Alex flicks on the flashlight to his phone and timidly makes his way towards the "spot".

As we are moving closer to the spot the flashlight starts to reveal a FORM in the corner, hunched over near the secret door, on its knees resting against the wall.

Alex creeps up closer with his light and we notice some BLOOD on the form's sleeve. The light starts PANNING UP to find the face of the form but just as we are about to see--

JULIE/DANA - CONTINUOUS

ON DANA'S FACE the flickering is now a steady STROBE of light. Her eyes getting heavier as Julie continues to rub her forehead with her fingers.

DANA
(falling away)
My mother's...kil...

JULIE
(quietly)
Shh. Go to sleep now. Rest. *When you
wake up you're going to be all better.*

Dana's EYES fall shut.

CELLAR - CONTINUOUS

The LIGHT from Alex's phone is right upon the side of the FORM'S HOODED FACE. His HAND enters the light to pull back the hood...

The FORM barely moves and Alex jerks his hand away.

Tense beat...

The FORM moves again...

ALEX
(whispering)
Chris..?

HOLD...

From the dark form we start to hear a familiar...

CHUCKLING.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The LIGHT goes out!

Hold in black for a long beat...

FADE IN:

INT. VILLA - GREAT ROOM - 3:00 A.M.

33

(Note: The three "light rooms" sequences are imagined as a dream-like feel. Feeling unnatural and unreal as we now begin to explore Dana's reality through her subconscious as it is being manipulated.)

DANA is asleep on the couch, covered with a PURPLE blanket. She is illuminated by the glow from the TV screen but the rest of the room is black. All is quiet and still...

A phone BBRINGSSS! Dana wakes with a start. She quickly locates the ringing-on an end table is an OLD FASHION-LOOKING PHONE that could be from the Edison era which wasn't there before. It RINGS again. She is fully awoken and slowly looks around her surroundings to get her bearing and suddenly realizes she is surrounded by darkness. Instant panic level "5"!

DANA

No. No.

Dana quickly searches for her phone behind her as the other phone continues to BLARINGLY RING. This annoying ringing greatly increases her stress. Her rapid breathing is turning into a slight hyperventilation.

She finally finds her phone in between the cushions of the couch and quickly shines the flashlight into her face. After a moment to calm her breathing she draws her attention back to the OLD FASHIONED PHONE on the little end table. RING...! RING...! RI--

Dana picks up the phone and trepidatiously answers.

DANA

H-hello?

No answer...

DANA

Hello.

We start to hear DEEP BREATHING...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA
Who is this?

Beat.

...**CHUCKLING**...

Dana's EYES quickly recalls a deep memory. Panic level "6"!

DANA
(near screaming)
Who are you!

Long beat...

CLICK.

Dana starts crying in her panic and shockingly hangs up the phone. She looks all around her...nothing but black. She can't move. No starting point.

She returns her attention back to her phone, it reads: 3:05. Desperate, Dana holds down a shortcut key to call someone.

We hear it ringing on the other end a few times then--

DARREL (O.S.)
(sounding groggy)
Honey? Is that you? What time is it?

DANA
(near hysterics)
Dad! Dad! Are you there?

DARREL (O.S.)
Dana? I'm here. Wh-

DANA
I need you to come and get me right now! Pleeese.

DARREL (O.S.)
Dana, calm down. What's wrong?

DANA
Please, dad!

DARREL (O.S.)
I'm still in San Francisco. In a hotel-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA

I'm scared, dad! I don't know what to do. Please come and get me. Please.

DARREL (O.S.)

Okay. Okay. Calm down. Just tell me what's happening?

DANA

There's somebody in the house. There's somebody here. I'm by myself.

DARREL (O.S.)

What do you mean there's somebody in the house?

Dana starts to contemplate the facts...facts that seem to be unreal. And silly if spoken out loud.

DANA

I don't know...
(second guessing)
He has Julie and...

Dana thinks twice about letting him know about the boys.

DARREL (O.S.)

(not quite believing her)
Alright. Hold on. Let me think.
(beat)
Dana, listen to me. In your phone I programmed a number to a police officer named Ms. Alvarez. Number nine. She already knows your situation and where you are tonight and you are to call her if there's anything wrong. Okay? She will help you.

DANA

But...

DARREL (O.S.)

I'm sorry I forgot to tell you before I left. I guess I was too much in a hurry. But I want you to call her right now. She will send help. And I'm going to get ready after we hang up and see if I can't get back by early morning. Alright?

Dana cries some more but now out of relief.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL (O.S.)
Dana..? You okay?

DANA
(recalling her sobs, finding how
silly she sounded)
Yeah. I'm sorry, dad.
(beat)
I tried.

DARREL (O.S.)
No, it's okay. I probably pushed you
too soon.

Dana lets out a little laugh from more relief. Talking to her
dad has helped.

DANA
Okay.

DARREL (O.S.)
You sure you weren't just having a bad
dream?

Dana looks over to find the old fashioned phone sitting on
the end table solidifying the reality of the moment then
moves your eyes to the glowing TV screen, remembering the
scary movie from earlier.

DANA
I'm okay, dad. I feel better. Just bad
dreams I guess.

DARREL (O.S.)
Alright. But I still want you to call
that police woman, okay?

DANA
I will. I promise.

DARREL (O.S.)
Good. I'm gonna let you go now. You
call if you need.

DANA
Okay.

DARREL (O.S.)
I love you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA
Love you, too.

CLICK.

Dana hangs up and looks over her shoulder for anyone lingering in the blackness behind her. Nothing. Panic level drops to "3".

DANA
Stupid movie.

She is about to dial "9" when her phone goes off, jolting her!

The caller ID reads: "Mom", with a picture of a chic Julie in her Hollywood sunglasses over it.

Dana waits a long second then answers it.

DANA
Julie? Where are you?

No answer, just some muffled sounds in the distance. Then a faint whimpering. Dana's panic level is about to go back up.

DANA
Julie? Can you hear me?

After a beat.

JULIE
(desperate whispering)
Dana! Help me! Please. Help me!

Dana is crushed by the reality of her nightmarish suspicions. She forces out her words.

DANA
Julie! W-what's wrong? Where are you?

JULIE
I don't know. I'm hiding in a *closet*.
(starting to cry)
He's looking for me! I can hear him walking around. I'm so scared. I want to go home.

Something triggers deep inside DANA, a remembered fear of the past. Panic level, "6"! She begins to rapidly breathe. Holds her chest...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA
(more to herself)
W-who's looking for you-

JULIE
(crying)
Dana... Chris is dead. He killed him.
He killed my Chris!

Her subconscious is starting to share a memory with her conscious...her face is writhing with this dangerous moment.

The TV SCREEN suddenly flashes a strong and bright STROBE of light-it hits her like lightning.

DARREL VO
(echoing)
No!

BANG! (heard from behind a wall)

DANA (7) VO
(echoing)
Mommy!

DANA - FLASHBACK

We are looking through the crack of the closet doors from Dana's (7) POV...

The DARK FIGURE turns towards the CLOSET DOORS and chuckles while slowly pulling out a handgun. He methodically points it at Darrell who is slowly regaining consciousness.

DANIELLE'S courage is rising, her fingers tightening over the knife's handle...

Darrel notices his wife's intentions.

DARREL
(vis: Danielle)
No!

DANIELLE courageously lunges at the dark figure to save her husband's life but the DARK FIGURE instinctively points the gun at her and pulls the trigger. BANG!

She lands hard on the floor.

DANA (O.S.)
Mommy!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL
Danielle!

Darrel flies to his wife's side in a shock. She's lifeless.

We hear the DARK FIGURE **CHUCKLING** (echoing) from behind.

INT. VILLA - NEGATIVE ROOM - LATER - (PRESENT DAY)

34

The **CHUCKLING** FADES OUT in the distance as (CU) DANA stirs from her sleep. DAZED.

WE PULL BACK to reveal the darken space which is lit up with RED LIGHT that you would see in a photographer's darkroom. This red light is coming from hundreds of flood lamps that cover every inch of the walls and ceiling.

Dana is lying on a familiar looking bench couch from Linda's office that is set in the middle of this room which appears more like a rectangle corridor you see in a museum.

On the "museum's" walls hang numerous framed pictures of Thomas Edison. Placed sporadically throughout the room are either real relics of Edison's inventions or close replicas of them with more bench couches places in front of these displays meant for the comfort of the viewer.

This "negative" red light neither has a calming effect nor a panic affect on DANA who sits up and realizes she is still holding her phone.

She stands up and looks around, trying to comprehend where she's at. It's obvious she is at one end of the corridor. She takes a few curious steps towards the far end...and recognizes a familiar setting in the distance. She heads for it, moving around the plateaued relics as she goes.

CUT TO:

DANA stops. In front of her, exposed in RED LIGHT is a detailed replica of Dana's (7) bedroom, all recreated from meticulous notes recorded by her psychologist.

It's a room of only two walls joined at the far corner...and in this far corner is a MANNEQUIN of Danielle on her knees, holding a knife. In the center, on the floor is a MANNEQUIN of Darrell, lying in an unconscious position with a DARK FIGURE looking MANNEQUIN over it, SHINY SILVER GUN in hand which is brightly lit by a carefully placed LED from the ceiling. This looks like a display piece made for a museum. Made for a psychological study.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA takes in this scene with great effect and weight. She is living inside a dream...inside a distant and unveiled memory now made tangible right in front of her. She is mesmerized with this scene as deep feelings and thoughts invade her consciousness.

We hear quiet CRYING of a child somewhere behind Dana. She turns around to find two familiar closet doors... She is finally reunited with her past.

Then...

DANA (7) VO
Mommy!...Mommy!...Momm-

DANA, as moving through water, approaches the closet doors...

Her hands come up to the knobs but stops short. Dana is trembling.

DANA (7) VO
Mommy!...Mommy!...Momm-

The familiar cries from this child pushes Dana further and we see her hands grab the knobs and open the two folding closet doors...INSIDE is a perfect MANNEQUIN of a seven-year-old Dana kneeling in front of the closet doors with a frightened expression sculpted on her face. Next to the mannequin, on a little table, is a revolving tape recorder playing...

DANA (7) VO
Mommy!...Mommy!...Momm-

A track that repeats itself.

Then, we hear that familiar **CHUCKLING** from behind. Dana steadily turns around and finds a robotic movement from the dark figure-mannequin's ARM which is holding the GUN, moving slightly upward from a pretend recoil. Seconds later we hear a low quality recording of a "BANG!" from a hidden tape recorder on a loop. The animatronics and sound effects are clearly out of sync giving us a hint that this was set up by amateurs.

In the CORNER we find the MANNEQUIN of Danielle raising the knife in a striking position then falls back down...then back up as we now hear a recorded voice of Darrel-

DARREL VO
No!... No!... No-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dana is piecing together the completed scene and after a few times watching the animatronics and the sound effects together on a loop we see this regressed memory of that night repeat itself over and over. But as DANA continues to watch this scene loop her subconscious gives up a flashback of the real thing--

QUICK SHOTS OF THIS FLASHBACK INTERCUT WITH THIS SCENE

The DARK FIGURE turns towards the CLOSET DOORS and chuckles while slowly pulling out a handgun. He methodically points it at Darrell who is slowly regaining consciousness.

DANIELLE'S courage is rising, her fingers tightening over the knife's handle...

Darrel notices his wife's intentions.

DARREL
(vis: Danielle)

No!

DANIELLE courageously lunges at the dark figure to save her husband's life but the DARK FIGURE instinctively points the gun at her and pulls the trigger. BANG!

She lands hard on the floor.

DANA (O.S.)
Mommy!

BACK TO SCENE

DANA is starting to hit a new panic level...panic level, "7"!

Her subconscious is starting to invade her conscious, threatening her resolve and her sanity. The two sides are coming together, sharing information as her conscious is starting to break.

As she watches the animatronic scene intercut with her flashbacks Dana starts to notice the mannequins are becoming more fluid in their movement. Coming to life...to the point that she can no longer decipher flashback from reality.

DARREL VO
No!... No!... N-

BANG!...BANG!...BANG!...

Her chest hurts! And she clutches it and collapses to the

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

floor next to the closet doors near her mannequin. The recording from it is clearer...

DANA (7) VO
MOMMY!...MOMMY!...MOMM-

DANA, in tears, starts to mouth the same words...

DANA
Mommy...mommy...

From her right side, a little square pedestal rolling on a miniature rail track laid on the floor slides near her. WE PAN UP and see an ORANGE TOY CAP GUN resting on top.

LINDA VO
(from a hidden speaker)
Shoot him, Dana. Shoot him, now.

In shock, Dana looks around to find Linda but she is nowhere to be found.

LINDA VO
Take the gun, Dana.

DANA finds the toy gun...then slowly reaches for it.

LINDA VO
Pull the trigger back.

She does.

LINDA VO
Now, point it at the assailant.

With trembling hands Dana points it at the dark figure-mannequin as she watches it repeatedly "shoot" the Danielle-mannequin. BANG!...BANG!...

LINDA VO
Now, pull the trigger.

DARREL VO
No!... No!... N-

Nothing... The CAP GUN just shakes in the air.

LINDA VO
Do it, Dana. Shoot him! You can stop him if you want to. You can stop him from killing your mother. You can save
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA VO (CONT'D)

her.

The CAP GUN SHAKES more violently as DANA is on the verge of total mental anguish! Her TRIGGER FINGER frozen.

LINDA VO

Shoot him!

(beat)

Shoot him, NOW!

DANA'S EYES dart around the room with indecision...

LINDA VO

(desperate, sounding like a killer herself)

Kill him! KILL HIM, DANA!

(beat)

NOW!

BANG!...BANG!...

PANIC LEVEL, "8"!

CHUCKLING...

A STRANGE AND WICKED look unexpectedly comes across Dana's face as she suddenly points the nozzle of the toy gun at the mannequin that represents her FATHER and waiting for the next "BANG!..." she times it perfectly and pulls the trigger, SPARKS explode from the toy cap ammo, BANG!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. VILLA - THE WHITE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

35

ECU ON DANA'S face. It is almost completely WHITED OUT. Just basic outlines of her features are noticeable. Her eyes are closed and she looks peaceful.

This room is a COMPLETE WHITEOUT. There is so much burning light that even the lines of nearby objects are inconspicuous.

The COUNTLESS LAMPS which cover every possible inch on the walls and the ceiling burn like a flaring meteorite and their HUMMING sound resembles a flaming torch.

Dana's EYELIDS start to rapidly flutter and her pupils underneath quickly dart back and forth like she is in a deep REM state. Her face starts to grimace...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then, suddenly, she wakes with a deep INHALE, eyes open wide.

She instantly recalls what played out in the "negative room" just minutes earlier and jolts her head left then right. As she does we are seeing what she is seeing...inconspicuous OBJECTS and BENCH COUCHES and SQUARED OUTLINES hanging on the walls. This room could be a perfect match of the "negative room" but without any detail we can't be for certain.

But, DANA has her suspicions and something towards the far end of the room draws her attention. She stands up and starts walking towards it.

Dana's panic level is at "0". She can't remember the last time she has lived a single solitary second without fear like this. She is almost elated in this over kill of light and starts to walk boldly. Her walking nearly turns into dancing. In this room she is confident, protected. Almost daring. FEARLESS.

CUT TO:

DANA arrives at the far end of this corridor and she stops...pondering what she see...but with a look of a menacing vigilante and not a cowering victim. This scene arouses something sinister inside her...REVENGE

REVERSE - It is the exact same scene of the memory of her mother's murder just as in the "negative room".

DANA fearlessly stands in the middle of this scene and takes it all in, like sustenance for something demented.

One by one all the mannequins and their respective recordings and animatronics begin to activate and play. Disneyland from hell.

"Mommy!"

"No!"

"Bang!"

DANA re-studies each MANNEQUIN, examining each of their rolls in this memory with more detail. After taking in this secret story her face reacts in a disgusted way...an angry way... She focuses all her attention on the DARK FIGURE.

Bang!... Bang!... Bang!...

Dana takes a bold step forward.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bang!... Bang!... B-

DANA
You like shooting people?

DANA finds the MANNEQUIN of Darrel...*empathetic*...

Bang!... Bang!... B-

...then to the MANNEQUIN of her mother...*sorrow*.

Back to the DARK FIGURE-MANNEQUIN.

Bang!... Bang!... B-

DANA
You shouldn't have done that.

We hear something mechanical moving towards Dana.

A barely visible PEDESTAL carrying a PAINTBALL GUN stops beside her.

DANA finds it. And instantly takes it, then death stares the dark figure-mannequin.

DANA
Now, you're gonna pay.

Dana looks over her weapon with full confidence. Absolutely no fear in this white-out room.

DANA (7) VO
Mommy!... Mommy!... M-

DANA, suddenly turns around to the kneeling MANNEQUIN of herself displayed in the closet, focusing in on her frightened FACE.

DANA (7) VO
Mommy!... Mommy!... M-

She is *remembering*...her anger turning to catharsis.

DANA turns her attention back on her "MOTHER", trying to find her face but it is hidden behind the fallen wig.

BANG!... BANG!... B-

Then darts back at the DARK FIGURE-MANNEQUIN with rage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA
STOP IT!

LINDA VO
(from a hidden speaker)
You can stop this, Dana. You can stop
him from killing your mother. But you
have to do something about it.

DANA hesitates... looks back at her "mother", trying to find
her face.

Bang!... Bang!... Bang!...

DANA lets out a CRY of frustration and rage and instantly
raises the paintball gun up to the dark figure-mannequin.

LINDA VO
Just pull the trigger, Dana. You can
do it. No fear now.
(beat)
You can stop him from killing your
mother, once and for all.

BANG!

SMASH CUT TO:

QUICK FLASH

IN THE DARK CLOSET, Darrel, Danielle and Dana (7) hide in
fear. A CRACK OF LIGHT shines on their frightened faces. A
SHADOW crosses their view and Danielle shakes. DANA (7) looks
up at her mother just as Danielle's FACE moves back into the
shadow.

BACK TO SCENE

DANA is staring at the FACE of her mother's mannequin, trying
to find her. Trying to remember.

DANA (7) VO
(NOT a recorded sound, more life
like)
Mommy!... Mommy!... *Where are you,*
mommy?

Dana spins around to her MANNEQUIN.

DANA (7) VO
Mommy!... Mommy!... Come find me. I'm
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA (7) VO (CONT'D)
waiting for you.

The mannequin's HEAD slightly turns towards Dana, SHOCKING her reality!

QUICK FLASH

DANA (7) VO
(life like now)
I'm waiting in the dark.

FADE IN

INSIDE her dark, bedroom closet. Dana, (7) etched by the crack of light, is covering her mouth, holding in her giggles.

DANIELLE VO
(playful)
Where. Are..you? I can't find you
anywhere.

More GIGGLES...

DANIELLE VO
Are...you in...here!

The CLOSET DOORS swing open and a WHITE OUT hits us just before we can see Danielle's FACE-

BACK TO SCENE

Lines of Dana's WHITED-OUT face fade back in. She turns towards the MANNEQUIN of her mother desperately expecting to find her. But it is lifeless, just raising the cold KNIFE up and down.

DANA
(sotto, remembering)
Mommy?
(beat)
I'm waiting for you in the dark.

LINDA VO
(viper tongue)
Stop it, Dana! Quit talking to your
mother and shoot the bad guy, already!
Kill him!

DANA has her attention forced back onto the DARK FIGURE-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MANNEQUIN, but is starting to turn resentful...

Bang!... Bang!... B-

LINDA VO
(vicious, desperate)
Kill him! Kill him, Dana!

...Dana's moment of serendipitous catharsis is ruined.

Bang!... Bang!... B-

DARREL VO
No!... No!...N-

DANA turns her head back to the Darrel-MANNEQUIN...and it looks straight in her direction!

DARREL VO
(softly)
...please forgive me.

Her reality is warping more and more in this "white room". Her consciousnesses are blending together.

LINDA VO
(demonic)
Dana! What are you waiting for! Kill him! Kill him before he kills your *pathetic mother!*

That same BLACK-EYED, wicked look instantly comes over Dana once again and she feverishly scans the walls and ceiling for any cubby-holes and small hidden spaces.

DANA
(dark)
Stop it!

QUICK SERIES OF SHOTS as we scan over all possible cubby-holes and hidden spaces...looking for something.

LINDA VO
(callous)
Or...maybe, you're the pathetic one!

THERE! Dana spots it...a small, hidden SPEAKER up in a corner over the ceiling, barely visible... WE ZOOM IN...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA VO
(malicious)
Maybe...

Dana takes aim...

LINDA VO
...maybe, you are the BOOGEYMAN!

On the "BANG!" goes the paintball gun...BLACK SPLATTER hits the small speaker!

CHUCKLINGGGG... RISING LOUDER...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. VILLA - MOOD ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

36

With the "SMASH CUT" we immediately SNAP TRANSITION from extreme white light to this now BLEAK, DARK and DEAD SILENT "mood room", a room designed to display every registered emotion expressed from the study subject by flashing a certain color scheme from miniature LED lights placed in the spaces between the hundreds of lamps that had already shown the whiteout light and the negative red light.

This room is the same single room used in the previous two before, only the lighting change has made the difference.

A WAVE of RED LED LIGHTS begin to flash along the walls immediately followed by another smaller wave of red LED lights that also roll behind it across the walls and the ceiling above to the far end of the corridor. It repeats, over and over, steadily, like clockwork. It has a rhythm. And with every pulse of light there is a matching sound effect that is paired with it. This display has a sound that mimics an UNDERWATER THUMP followed by a SWISHING noise behind it. We study it for a moment and recognize we are listening to and watching somebody's registered *heartbeat*.

CU on DANA'S FACE which is partially hidden in this BLEAK DARKNESS...revealed only in the rolling red LED light reflected on her we see that her eyes are peacefully closed, asleep in monotone tranquility.

VERY SLOWLY PULLING AWAY we start to notice electrodes placed on both sides of her temples. Now, we see she has ear buds inserted into her ears. PULLING BACK FURTHER STILL we see that she is fitted with a wearable "EKG" vest that can monitor emotional fluctuations that register on the walls by the LED lights.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Finally, as the camera stops, we see that she is lying on the same bench couch as earlier.

The rolling red LED lights starts to flash more quickly, heartbeats coming more rapidly. The UNDERWATER THUMPING SOUND more powerful...

DANA, suddenly rises from her sleep with a panic look on her face...a LIGHT-GREEN scheme throbs from the LAMPS like waves of an ocean. Its sound...SOFT WAVES BREAKING AGAINST A CLIFF.

The light green throbbing rolls faster and faster...Dana's panic level rises...red LED light (heartbeat) flashes quicker...

She feverishly scrambles around for her phone...she finds it but before she can turn on the flashlight a BRIGHT FOCUSED BEAM of LIGHT coming from the far end of the corridor hits her. A SPOTLIGHT to instantly calm her...slowing the beats of the red LED lights.

Dana stands up and is drawn forward through the corridor by the spotlight's bright comfort like a moth to the flame. *She is the highlighted darling in a play of post-traumatic psychotherapy.*

As Dana nears the anticipated scene of her constructed memory the WAVE of the light-green scheme turns to LIGHT-PURPLE...nostalgia remembered. SOUNDS of WHALES UNDERWATER.

She stops in the center of the familiar scene and finds all the usual MANNEQUINS in their respective places. They wait... *silent and still.*

LINDA VO

(coming from the earbuds)

Dana? Can you hear me?

Dana raises a hand to an earbud signally she is aware of Linda's voice.

LINDA VO

I want you to go over and stand next to your mother.

Dana looks up and finds the MANNEQUIN of her mother. LIGHT PURPLE changes to DARK PURPLE mixing with some YELLOW while the "RED HEARTBEAT" intensifies on the walls. SEAGULLS CALL OUT.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA VO

It's okay, Dana. I'm with you. I'm
right here.

Dana obeys like a lifeless soldier.

LINDA VO

Take the knife from her hand.

Dana takes the KNIFE from the mannequin's hand but doesn't
realize that it was from a REAL HAND.

LINDA VO

Look at your father lying helplessly
on the ground.

Dana finds her "father". A quick cascade of BLUE LIGHTS
trickle from the ceiling to the floor as we hear the SOUND of
a POWERFUL WATERFALL.

LINDA VO

Now, look at the dark figure over him.
(beat)
Don't be afraid.

DANA'S POV: we see a NEW ANGLE ON the dark figure hovering
over her "father" looking straight at us with those TWO PIN
POINT LIGHTS for eyes hidden inside the shadowed face, SHINY
SILVER GUN in hand.

FASTER RED HEARTBEAT...

LINDA VO

He is about to kill your father, Dana.

The looped recording of the dark figure's menacing laugh
starts to FADE IN... **CHUCKLING**...a beat...**CHUCKLING**...

The DARK PURPLE SCHEME turns into a waves of DARK PURPLE with
hints of DARK RED and YELLOW. We hear what a SUN FLARE would
sound like. MIGHTY and ROARING.

LINDA VO

Look at how this makes you feel, Dana.

Dana glances all around her and finds waves of DARK RED RAGE
rolling across the walls and ceiling.

LINDA VO

He is the reason for you hurt all the
time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA VO (CONT'D)

(beat)

Why you are always angry.

LONGER and DEEPER WAVES of DARK RED roll along the walls and ceiling.

Dana finds her "father" again.

LINDA VO

I know you want to save him. Even
though you're small and feel helpless.

Dana looks towards the closet and finds the little MANNEQUIN of herself with fright etched on its face.

The waves of DARK RED LIGHT flash some YELLOW-GREEN with sounds of distant ORCAS calling underwater.

Dana looks away and re-focuses on her fallen "father". The wave pattern dominates with the CASCADING BLUES over the DARK RED. She is tempted to act out her aggression.

The "EKG" VEST suddenly sends a series of mild electrical shocks to her chest to further mimic her mother's projected feelings, FEAR, HOPELESSNESS and LOSS. As these tubes of fluorescent filaments carries this electricity to her body, DANA reacts with less and less strength to act upon her aggression. She is now acting out her mother's emotions projected in this situation.

DARK GREEN and YELLOW stroll across the LAMPS with a tidal wave of BLUES and WHITES.

LINDA VO

Fight through this pain and fear, Dana
and let your love for your father push
you to save him. You have more power
than you think.

DANA finds her "father's" EYES. They are incredibly life like behind a plastic mask! This is a new angle from Danielle's POV as we now understand what drove her to this moment...*harrowing eye contact filled with immense love between the two...*

Darrel's EYES are begging for help!

Dana's fingers tighten around the knife as her RED HEARTBEAT pounds even more rapidly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDA VO

Yes! That's it. You can do it, Dana.
You can kill him! You can save your
father.

DARREL VO

No... No!... No!

LINDA VO

Do it, Dana! Do it now! Save your
father!

CHUCKLING... Beat. **CHUCKLING...**

RED HEARTBEAT rolls along the walls extremely fast and
powerful...WAVES of DARK RED RAGE permeate the room and
briefly interrupted with YELLOW-GREEN light of fear and
cowardice with BLUES and WHITES from her love. DANA is
continuing to stare at her "FATHER"...

Darrel's EYES BLINK! A TEAR falls over the plastic mask.

DANA is jolted by this eye contact! The YELLOW-GREEN colors
vanish.

DARREL VO

(NOT a recording, but life like)
No!... No... N...

LINDA VO

DO IT!

DANA, suddenly jumps forward with knife in hand and, BANG!

The Darrell mannequin's ARM recoils from a pretend gun shot
at the same time the "EKG" vest sends a bolt of electricity
to her chest simulating the pain of a gunshot.

DANA falls back a step as though she was just shot but
recovers. The RED HEARTBEAT momentarily stops then picks back
up again with full force...powerful THUMPS!

LINDA VO

Again!

DANA sets herself for another lunge...

DARREL VO

NO!

Darrel's EYES beg for her to stop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA FLIES TWO STEPS-

-BANG!

Another strong BOLT of electricity shocks her chest,
EXPLODING the fluorescent filament tubes with bright blue
streams!

DANA falls back harder, almost being knocked to the floor.
The RED HEARTBEAT STOPS...the RED LIGHTS of rage waiver in
strength...

But, quickly, the RED HEARTBEAT THUMPS again and her RED RAGE
rolls deeper along the walls and ceiling.

LINDA VO
(animalistic)
AGAIN!

DANA CHARGES about three or four steps with a warrior-like
CRY then another mighty BANG!

Her "EKG" vest electrifies brighter than before sending DANA
flying backwards a few feet with a tremendous shock! IN SLOW
MOTION, as her mother had before, we watch DANA land lifeless
on the floor.

DARREL (O.S.)
NO!

The KNIFE flies off in the distance.

The RED HEARTBEAT STOPS...the RED LIGHTS of RAGE completely
fizzle out.

Darrel's EYES dart left then right with serious panic...

ANGLE ON the lifeless WALLS plagued with lamps...
waiting...standing by...

DARREL (O.S.)
(whispering)
You're killing her.

LINDA (O.S.)
Quiet.

Beat...

The "EKG" vest sizzles and pops with some mild electricity
every few seconds like a weak defibrillator...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

...a BOLD THUMP of a RED HEARTBEAT! ...then another and another.

LINDA VO

Dana? Dana!

Dana rises off the floor like Frankenstein's monster, awake but asleep. Not present.

LINDA VO

Dana. I want you to go inside the closet, now.

On the little track near the closet rolls the same PEDESTAL as before carrying a REAL GUN. A .357 Magnum.

Dana's HEAD robotically moves around to the closet and stops. Her DARK and WICKED EYES finds the gun.

Suddenly, ALL the LAMPS on the walls and ceiling STAMP a DARK RED COLOR then off then quickly back on for a short burst, following with the sound of MOUNTAINS FALLING! This is her new heartbeat. A new mania of rage in her heart. A new disorder. A new PERSONALITY!

DANA rises to her feet as though she were a giant and looks around the room. The RED STAMP HITS HARDER. HEAVIER MOUNTAINS, crushing us!

LINDA VO

Dana! Go to the closet!

Dana starts walking towards the other end of the corridor, towards the exit. And on the way out she takes the GUN and slides it behind her waistband.

LINDA VO

Dana! Wait! Shoot the assailant!

DARREL (O.S.)

Stop her! That's not my daughter!

Dana is moving out of sight...

LINDA (O.S.)

(panicking)

I can't!

The walls start flashing the "negative" red light mixed with the DARK RED STAMPS followed by the incredible sounds of GREAT MOUNTAINS FALLING.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL (O.S.)

I'm going to break character if you
can't stop her!

LINDA (O.S.)

That will kill her. You don't wake up
a sleepwalker!

DARREL (O.S.)

You had your chance!

LINDA (O.S.)

No! Wait! I can do this.

The walls now begin to FLASH the BRIGHT WHITE-OUT FLOOD LIGHTS in between the "negative" red light. A STROBE of WHITE LIGHT and INFRARED LIGHT. This is an absolute desperate attempt to stop Dana with a barrage of light sensory overload.

DANA is right in front of the door, a massive assault of light flashes all around her. We ZOOM IN CLOSE to her face...Her EYES are DEMONIC BLACK...then, her LIPS form a LITTLE WICKED GRIN!

DANA

*I'm coming for you. I'm coming for you
all!*

DANA exits the room followed by an immense sound of FALLING ROCK.

LINDA VO

(desperate)

DANA! You're falling!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. VILLA - GREAT ROOM - 4:00 A.M.

37

DANA jerks awake from what was seemingly a dream...the ECHOES from "falling!" dying away. She takes a moment to ponder her "dream"...

The GLOW from the TV SCREEN reveals she has been sleeping on the same couch as earlier, covered with the PURPLE blanket.

DANA quickly scans her surroundings...she has been here once before. The blackness shakes her but not as bad. Panic level, "4".

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She realizes she is still holding her phone. It turns on to a bright screen and after a beat of soaking in the comforting glow, Dana is about to hit the number "9" button but hesitates. She looks around one more time, looking for anything, maybe for anybody lurking in the darkness. Second guessing her sanity.

Dana turns towards the little end table and finds the OLD-FASHION PHONE sitting there. She ponders it with an unsettling look. After a moment she turns on both lamps near the two couches. The room is now brighter and more comfortable.

After a few heavy exhales, she looks towards the KITCHEN...at the BACK DOOR, remembering...

KITCHEN - A MOMENT LATER

A kitchen light comes on and DANA stops in front of the BACK DOOR and waits a beat...she moves the curtain over the door window and looks outside. BLACKNESS, except for a nearby yellow light post over the driveway. After seeing no "homeless person" in sight she then "un-snaps" the door lock and places a hand on the door knob, ready to courageously investigate the drive-

A GENERIC RING from her phone! INSERT SCREEN: "Blocked Number".

DANA
(timid)
Hello?

MS. ALVAREZ
Dana?

DANA
(hesitant)
Yes.

MS. ALVAREZ
This is Ms. Alvarez down at the Laguna
Beach Police Department?

Beat. Her voice sounds familiar...an educated Hispanic accent.

MS. ALVAREZ
Dana?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA

Oh, yes. I'm sorry. I was just going to call you, ma'am.

MS. ALVAREZ

Right. Your father called a few minutes ago before boarding his plane, wanted to know if I had heard from you...

Dana pulls the curtains back from the door's window and looks outside once more...HER POV-looking at the TRASH CANS which are upright.

MS. ALVAREZ

Dana?

DANA

Umm, yeah, I know. I'm sorry. I guess I fell back to sleep. My head has been hurting pretty bad-

MS. ALVAREZ

Well, your father told me that you told him you thought there was somebody else in the house with you?

DANA'S POV

Now PANNING the driveway next to the trash cans for *blood*.

BACK TO SCENE

MS. ALVAREZ

Dana?

DANA

(still looking out the window)

Yeah.

MS. ALVAREZ

Is there somebody else there with you who isn't suppose to be? Are you okay?

Dana turns away from the window and steps in the center of the kitchen where the BACK DOOR is unfocused in the background behind her.

DANA

Well, ma'am, to be honest, we had two boys over tonight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dana nervously picks out the LARGE CHEF KNIFE from the knife block and fidgets with it. SHARP SILVER BEAMS hit her face...her EYES seem to flash BLACKNESS for a microsecond.

MS. ALVAREZ

It's okay. I mean an *intruder*?

DANA looks up towards the great room...ZOOMING in on the OLD-FASHION PHONE, second guessing.

DANA

(confused)

Things have been kinda confusing lately.

A SHADOW suddenly crosses the back door behind her!

MS. ALVAREZ

Dana, let me ask you...how well do you know these boys?

DANA

I don't know. Not too long I suppose. Why?

The BACK DOOR SLOWLY falls open...

MS. ALVAREZ

Well, you know how these boys are now days, when they want your attention?

Dana smiles a bit. The BACK DOOR slides all the way open revealing a DARK FIGURE standing right behind her under the frame.

DANA

Yeah. Dorks.

MS. ALVAREZ

You know what I think?

The DARK FIGURE steps inside, just a few feet from Dana.

DANA

(embarrassed)

What?

MS. ALVAREZ

I think they are just playing with you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA
You think?

Dana takes a few casual steps forward, away from the unnoticed DARK FIGURE behind her.

REVERSE DANA - DARK FIGURE POV

We are a few feet behind Dana, watching her elegant back and neckline fill the FRAME. WE DRAW CLOSER...so close we could smell her perfume.

MS. ALVAREZ
Sure. They don't know yet how to express their feelings for you so they show off or try to impress you by protecting you from harm, even making something up that isn't true to protect you from.

DANA
Yeah?

MS. ALVAREZ
Yeah, like making up some *Boogeyman*.

The BREATH of the dark figure slightly moves the LOOSE HAIR of Dana.

DANA quickly turns around...to nobody there but...the unfocused back door ZOOMS IN TO FOCUS...and it is open! A cool BREEZE wafts in the air...

Panic level, "5".

DANA
(calling quietly)
Hello?

MS. ALVAREZ
What was that?

DANA is frozen, eyes locked on the outside BLACKNESS.

MS. ALVAREZ
Dana?

DANA
(whispering)
The back door is open.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MS. ALVAREZ

What do you mean? Did you open it?

Dana starts to breathe heavier...

DANA

I don't know.

(beat)

Wait. I unlocked it. Yes. I opened it
to look outside. Maybe the wind pushed
it...

Dana takes a small step forward to close it...then a thought
stops her.

DANA

No. I was going to. I looked through
the window first.

Panic level, "6"! Faster breathing...

MS. ALVAREZ

Are you sure?

DANA

Yes! I'm sure.

Dana takes a steady step backwards...then another, away from
the BLACK DOOR FRAME.

MS. ALVAREZ

Okay. Dana, listen to me. I want you
to get out of the house. Go to a
neighbors house and pound on the door
until they let you in. I'm sending a
police officer there right now. He
will be there in seven minutes. Do you
understand?

Dana takes another heavy step backwards...scanning her
surroundings with her peripheral vision.

DANA

(sotto)

This is real.

(beat)

He's found me.

MS. ALVAREZ

Do you understand!?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA stops cold, frozen look on the outside BLACKNESS.

MS. ALVAREZ

Dana!

DANA

(focused)

Yes.

MS. ALVAREZ

Now, run!

DANA turns around to the open space and RUNS for her life towards the front door through the

GREAT ROOM

glancing behind her...

Then, the old-fashion phone BBRINGSS!

DANA stops! It BBRINGSS again. She nervously turns around to the

OLD-FASHION PHONE...BBBRINGGGG!

MS. ALVAREZ

Dana?

DANA

The phone is ringing.

BBRINGGG...beat...BBRINGG!

DANA slowly walks towards it with extreme curiosity, motivated by doubt...

DANA

I'm going to answer it.

MS. ALVAREZ

No! Dana, do not answer it! Get out of the house!

(beat)

Dana?

She draws closer to it...BBBRINGGG!

DANA

They're playing a joke on me.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA (CONT'D)
It's all been one big joke.

MS. ALVAREZ
Do not answer it! Dana! Hun-

BBRI-

Dana picks up, lowering her own phone by her side as the words of Ms. Alvarez dies on the line.

DANA
H-hello?

Beat.

DARK FIGURE VO
Happy Anniversary little one.

CHUCKLING...

In complete terror Dana drops the receiver on the floor.
Panic level, "7"!

Her own PHONE holds at her side...ZOOMING IN...we start to hear Ms. Alvarez's VOICE-

MS. ALVAREZ
Run! Get out of there, Dana!

DANA turns towards the front door and somehow makes her wobbly legs move towards it. They gradually move her faster and faster, driven by the ultimate fear, when, suddenly, the LIGHTS GO OUT and she trips over a raised step in the

ENTRY

and crashes at the

FRONT DOOR

She looks back and we see TOTAL DARKNESS. TOTAL SILENCE...

WE can still hear the VOICE of Ms. Alvarez in the dark, calling...

MS. ALVAREZ
Dana?... Are you still there?
(beat)
Sweetheart? Talk to me. Where are you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA lets out a desperate CRY like that of a small child calling for her mother in the dark.

MS. ALVAREZ

I'm here, Dana. Where are you?

DANA

I'm at the door...

DANA turns her head towards the door where the soft MOONLIGHT shines from its small pane windows. The moonlight rests on Dana's face and she desperately takes in every available molecule.

CHUCKLING...

She SNAPS her head back towards the DARKNESS.

DANA

Oh, he's here!

MS. ALVAREZ

Dana! Listen to me. Get out of the house, now!

(fading away)

You're almost there...

Dana looks down at her SCREEN and the glow is dimming...Ms. Alvarez's words are fading away...

INSERT SCREEN: Battery level 0%

A DARK BEING HOWLING with vengeance.

Dana's panic level is skyrocketing! Panic level, "8"!

With her last strength of sanity she turns towards the fading MOONLIGHT and claws at the door. It's like watching a paraplegic...

WE HEAR HEAVY FOOTSTEPS POUNDING the floor and drawing closer!

DANA

Oh, please, please, please...

The door finally clicks open and swings wide. DANA peers outside and it's nothing but BLACKNESS! Its dark force is menacing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MS. ALVAREZ
(barely there)
Get out, Dana!

DANA
I can't. It's too dark.

MS. ALVAREZ
Yes you can-

The SCREEN goes BLACK!

The DARK FIGURE has arrived and stands menacingly at her feet...his PIN-POINT LIGHT for eyes PIERCE US through the HOODED SHADOW for his head.

Dana hits panic level, "9"!

She crawls to the door steps' edge with what's left of her fleeting strength sapped from a deep fear long dwelling inside her and with a tormented FACE she looks up towards the sky, trying to find salvation... Some coastal fog sweeps over the hills and the BRIGHT MOONLIGHT quivers through but is quickly covered over, arresting Dana in near paralysis at the edge.

OUTSIDE THE FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

We watch Dana gasp for help, nothing coming out of her gaping mouth but hollow sounds of terror. She clutches at the MOON above. It's LIGHT tries to break free but it is helplessly covered behind the dark and relentless COASTAL FOG.

With the last of her strength she slowly curls up, lost in her mind, beyond the reaches of knowledge and hope. *Falling* into a catatonic world. WE CLOSE IN ON HER EYES...WILD, LOST...and FORGOTTEN.

CONTINUE TO ZOOM IN CLOSER...ON HER LIGHT BROWN IRIDES...they are changing COLOR...starting from the center of her black pupil to the edges. CLOSER...like looking at a BLACK SUN THROWING OUT SOLAR FLARES of YELLOWS, REDS, DARK REDS, crystallized with some SHARP BLUES...turning into MACRO EYES...then finally, as we ZOOM CLOSER INSIDE HER BLACK PUPILS we are totally enveloped into total **DARKNESS**...

CUT TO:

WE HIDE IN BLACK...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANIELLE VO
(playful)
Sweetheart, are you there? Where are
you?

We hear gentle GIGGLES from a little girl...

DANIELLE VO
(sounding closer)
I just can't seem to find my little
girl anywhere. What should I ever do?

Dana giggles some more.

A CRACK OF LIGHT slowly appears and we see a cute little girl, Dana (7), covering her mouth trying to hold in her excitement. A SHADOW crosses over her porcelain face. She GIGGLES again.

DANIELLE (O.S.)
She must have picked a really good
hiding spot this time.

DANA'S (7) POV

We are looking through the SPACE in between the closet doors and are watching DANIELLE pretend to be looking for her daughter in this game. We can see her body move around the room but not her face.

GIGGLES...

Danielle stops and slowly moves towards the closet doors...

DANIELLE
Where is she?

BACK TO SCENE

DANA holds her mouth tighter now, holding in her joy.

DANIELLE (O.S.)
Oh well. I guess that was just a
little mouse I heard.

The SHADOW moves away from Dana's FACE and the crack of light shows us she is disappointed, almost nervous.

OUTSIDE THE CLOSET DOORS - CONTINUOUS

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA (7) (O.S.)
(nervous)
Mommy! I'm in here!

From behind us DANIELLE moves to the closet doors and waits a beat...

She reaches out and gently pulls open the doors letting bright light inside Dana's hiding place and onto DANA herself. She looks like an alive doll...a little animated mannequin.

DANIELLE
(playing)
Sweetheart, what were you doing in there?

DANA (7)
(unsure)
I was waiting for you, mommy. I was waiting for you in the dark and you never came.

DANIELLE
But, I'm here now.

Dana's unsure look suddenly turns joyous.

DANA (7)
Okay! Now your turn. You hide.

CUT TO:

INT. DANA'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

38

DANA is wondering all over looking for her mother...under the bed...behind furniture and toys but to no avail. She is starting to get worried.

DANA (7)
(sotto)
Mommy?

DANIELLE (O.S.)
Psst.

Dana stops to listen...

DANA (7)
Where are you? I don't see you anywhere.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANIELLE (O.S.)
(whispering)
I'm hiding in the dark.

Dana turns towards the CLOSET DOORS and waits...

DANIELLE (O.S.)
(whispering still)
Come and find me.

DANA is apprehensive. She slowly moves to the front of the doors and stops...

DANIELLE (O.S.)
I'm in here.

DANA has a look of Christmas on her face.

DANIELLE (O.S.)
Just open the doors.

Dana reaches out her hands...

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. DANA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT

39

BLACK!

After a beat we start to hear a COMMOTION RISING UP that seems to be coming from behind a wall or a door. As the sound rises up higher we can tell it is *violent*...furniture toppling over and a great THUD of something heavy hitting the floor...it's a struggle for survival...something familiar that we have already seen in the beginning of the story.

Now, we hear a FAINT WHIMPERING, not on the other side of a wall or door but right next to us.

A CRACK OF LIGHT appears, moonlight...starting thin then, widening. This light is coming from the space made from the gap of two closet doors. More heavy THUMPS...no words but only GRUNTS and RAGING GROWLS from disparity. Then a HIGH PITCH SCREAM, short then muffled.

A face enters this beam of light...it is DANA. HORRIFIED. She is worn, tried and tested. She has been poured out on the altar of humanity and her soul, exposed and ripped by undignified judges. Walls of defense have been crumbled. Humility drained and given over to depravity. She is already at panic level, "8"!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dana moves an EYE in front of the beam...A HEAVY THUD...she JERKS away, out of instinct.

ALEX (O.S.)
You can't have her!

Shadows cross Dana's face.

Another SHORT SCREAM coming from the far end of the room.

DANA moves to find the source of this scream.

DANA'S POV

We PAN to the left and find JULIE, huddled in a corner, battered and bruised, tear-smeared makeup running down her cheeks, frightened to death and tightly clutching a stuffed animal. She is watching a death-match, trying to stay invisible.

TWO FIGURES FALL into view. One is ALEX, busted up and bleeding from the lip, the other is the DARK FIGURE!

BACK TO SCENE

DANA lets out a little YELP of fear and instantly covers her mouth.

OUTSIDE THE CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

The DARK FIGURE manages to position himself on top of Alex and freezes for a second and turns to the CLOSET DOORS. He lets out a small chuckle...knowing his prize is waiting.

ALEX takes advantage of this moment and lands a sneaky left hook, landing solidly on the side of the hooded face of the dark figure. This enrages the dark figure and he counters with a more powerful right blow, landing hard on the side of Alex's temple, severely stunning him.

The dark figure SNARLS IN RAGE and pulls out a familiar KNIFE from his side and raises it up high over his head...the moonlight striking it, a brilliant CHROME shining in the dark air...

The DARK FIGURE looks once again at the CLOSET DOORS...

DARK FIGURE
(deep and demented)
Watch this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INSIDE THE CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

DANA shakes from what she is witnessing...

DANA'S POV

The DARK FIGURE SLAMS down hard, driving the thick knife deep into Alex's chest! BLOOD erupts out of his mouth in an over the top display of gore and violence.

BACK TO SCENE

DANA hits panic level, "9"! Her hands cemented over her mouth. A FLASH of DARK RED LIGHT slices through the crack of the doors with the sound of MOUNTAINS COLLAPSING.

DANA'S POV

The DARK FIGURE get up, takes a long look at JULIE over in the corner who is stricken with fear, and makes his way toward the closet doors.

BACK TO SCENE

DANA backs away in terror, keeping an eye in the crack of moonlight...

The crack of light dims by an invading shadow. We can hear DEEP, LABORIOUS BREATHING.

DANA'S POV

The FACE of the dark figure is just inches from her own! Through the gap we can see an EYE looking straight at us! As he moves slightly we start to see his HIDEOUS SCAR, running deep, from top to bottom, right down his cheek.

DARK FIGURE

(demonic)

Happy Anniversary little one.

BACK TO SCENE

DANA is completely helpless...

The POINT of his knife, stained with blood, slowly inserts through the crack of the doors, sliding up and down, teasing and tormenting her.

CHUCKLING!...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANA falls back, clutching her chest. She starts choking on the darkness around her. This is the end. Her body starting to curl up--

--SMASH! A THIRD FIGURE suddenly tackles the dark figure out of nowhere! They go sprawling across the floor in a mass of rage.

Dana re-finds the CRACK OF LIGHT and it momentarily pumps new life into her, filling her eyes with hope.

DANA'S POV

The TWO FIGURES are locked in a game of mortal kombat, trying to end the other's life. The dark figure is viciously lunging with his knife as the other is wildly swinging a heavy metal decorative rod. This battle is more violent and fierce.

JULIE (O.S.)
 (begging for life)
 Come on, baby! You can do it! Don't
 stop! Please!

WE PAN and notice the third figure is CHRIS, a bleeding cut and bruise over his brow. Chris swings his rod and it lands sharp against the hooded head of the dark figure.

OUTSIDE OF CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Enraged, the DARK FIGURE exposes the SILVER KNIFE, raising it high over his head, it shines bright in the BLUE MOONLIGHT coming from the window...

JULIE (O.S.)
 Chris!

The dark figure viciously strikes but it misses and CHRIS KICKS him hard in the chest, sending the KNIFE spinning in JULIE'S direction. Julie finds it with her harrowing EYES...

The dark figure and Chris continue to battle for life and death. The dark figure is stronger and winning.

JULIE quietly takes the knife and scans its gleaming edge then looks at the dark figure with a daring in her eye.

Suddenly, the DARK FIGURE strikes a lucky blow with his elbow sending Chris to the floor. He is stunned.

JULIE
 No! Chris!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCKLING...

The DARK FIGURE looks towards the CLOSET DOORS while slowly pulling out a HANDGUN. He methodically points it at Chris who is slowly regaining consciousness.

JULIE

No!

JULIE'S courage is rising, her fingers tightening over the knife's handle...

INSIDE THE CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

DANA is hyperventilating as she is compelled to watch this scene play out...

DANA'S POV

The DARK FIGURE pulls back the hammer...CLICK...click.

JULIE (O.S.)

Nooo! Please! What do you want!?

CHRIS starts coming to.

The DARK FIGURE looks towards the closet doors...EYE CONTACT!

DARK FIGURE

Too bad you'll never see your mother again.

CHUCKLING...

BACK TO SCENE

DANA'S numb face is hit with extreme WHITE LIGHT through the crack that is getting brighter...

DANIELLE VO (ECHOING)

(playful)

Where. Are..you? I can't find you anywhere.

QUICK FLASH

We're facing the inside of the CLOSET DOORS from Dana's (7) POV...

We hear Dana (7) GIGGLE...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANIELLE VO (ECHOING)
Are...you in...here!

The CLOSET DOORS swing open and a WHITE OUT hits us just before we can see Danielle's FACE-

BACK TO SCENE

Lines of DANA'S WHITED-OUT face fade back in as the bright light leaves its intensity through the CRACK of the closet doors until the original crack of moonlight is restored.

DANA
(sotto, remembering)
Mommy?
(beat)
I'm waiting for you in the dark.

JULIE (O.S.)
No! Please don't!

CHUCKLING...

Dana comes to reality and looks through the crack.

DANA'S POV

JULIE'S courage rises and she tightens her grip on the knife.

CHRIS lifts his head and notices his girlfriend's intentions.
HARROWING EYE CONTACT.

JULIE starts shaking her head from the inevitable.

CHRIS
No! Don't do it, baby.

JULIE
(almost mouthing the words forced
from courage)
I'm sorry. I have to.

CHRIS
No!

CHUCKLING...

The whole room is hit with a FLAT OF DARK RED LIGHT and the SOUND of EARTH RUMBLING!

BACK TO SCENE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The DARK RED FADES from Dana's FACE as she continues to gaze through the crack in the doors.

DANA'S POV

The DARK FIGURE puts the muzzle of the gun to the back of Chris's head.

The ROOM STROBES again to a complete WHITE OUT.

BACK TO SCENE

DANA is hit again with the piercing WHITE LIGHT entering through the crack and falls back further this time but topples over something inside the closet.

She looks down and in the WHITE OUT LIGHT she is able to see TWO MANNEQUINS. One that represents her father and one that represents her mother from earlier.

She sits them up and finds the face of her "father"...it's a perfect replica of Darrel. She feverishly takes her "mother" and finds the face...but it is smooth and without form or features. It's a face erased!

Dana just stares at it with a longing, looking at her faceless "mother" as the WHITE OUT STROBE fades back to dark...making it harder to capture the memory of her.

DANA

No!

A DARK RED GLOW cuts inside again followed by the sounds of an EARTHQUAKE...then dying out.

Then another STROBE of WHITE-OUT LIGHT comes in, exposing the faceless mannequin.

DANA (7) VO (ECHOING)

(sotto)

Mommy?

DANIELLE VO (ECHOING)

Psst.

Dana stills to listen...

DANA (7) VO (ECHOING)

Where are you? I don't see you
anywhere.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The WHITE STROBE FADES OUT TO...

DANIELLE VO (ECHOING)
(whispering)
I'm hiding in the dark.

Dana turns towards the closet doors, to US...WE ZOOM IN TO HER EYES...

DANIELLE VO (ECHOING)
(whispering still)
Come and find me.

DANA'S IRIDES are EXPLODING with YELLOWS and REDS and crystallized with BLUES...turning into MACRO EYES of another person...of another PERSONALITY.

DANA (7) VO (ECHOING)
Where are you?

DANIELLE VO (ECHOING)
I'm in here.

DANA has a look of wicked Christmas on her face.

DANIELLE VO (ECHOING)
Just open the doors.

Dana reaches out her hands... Another FLAT of DARK RED EXPLODES inside, hitting her IMPISH FACE...hellish, aflame EYES...and pushes the closet doors open.

DANA steps out of the closet and waits...the DARK RED STROBE FADING OUT.

JULIE, CHRIS and the DARK FIGURE are suspended in this warped reality...but are moving in EXTREME SLOW MOTION.

The walls and ceiling come alive with wave after wave of STROBING WHITE LIGHT followed by FLASHES OF DARK RED accompanied with sounds of STARS COLLIDING and an APPROACHING EARTHQUAKE.

The HEAVY RED PULSE of her heartbeat rolls along the walls and ceiling...steadily rising...

DANA is all powerful in this scene. FEARLESS.

The WHITE and DARK RED FLAT are strobing more frequently.

The floor, walls and the furniture are literally bouncing and

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

shaking as the APPROACHING EARTHQUAKE RISES HIGHER...

DANA'S MACRO EYES are something fierce!

DANIELLE VO (ECHOING)
I'm waiting for you, sweetheart...

DANA'S BLACK PUPILS DILATE LARGE...BLACK EVIL EYES, from another personality within...

DANIELLE VO (ECHOING)
...I'm waiting in the dark!

SMASH CUT TO:

On the word "dark" we instantly SNAP BACK TO-

INT. DANA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

40

JULIE, CHRIS and the DARK FIGURE who were suspended in this warped reality now INSTANTLY continue in real time.

The DARK FIGURE is caught off guard and notices something edgy about Dana who is still standing in front of the closet doors.

DARK FIGURE
And what do we have here?

CHUCKLING!

JULIE is saturated with terror and hanging on the edge of suspension, finds Dana while waiting for unseen salvation...

DANA is five foot nothing but standing as a fearless giant, a curveball thrown at the DARK FIGURE who feels threatened by her and in this feels humiliated then angered.

DARK FIGURE
What do you think you're gonna do, missy?

We re-find Dana's ENLARGED BLACK PUPILS...horrifying to see.

DANA
I'm going to shoot you dead.

DARK FIGURE
Wha...

DANA extends her arms down at a forty-five degree angle on

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

both sides of her body... opening palms to reveal nothing in her hands.

JULIE looks back at CHRIS who share a look then back at DANA, standing there in front of her assailant.

The DARK FIGURE starts to chuckle a bit...

DARK FIGURE
Just a crazy girl.

WE ANGLE ON a CLOSE UP of the back of Dana's HEAD...then SLOWLY PAN DOWN...to her shoulders...to her back... then WE STOP at her WAISTBAND.

IN SLOW MOTION

DANA'S RIGHT HAND swings around to behind her back, reaches under her shirt...grapples with something...and a .357 MAGNUM HANDGUN is pulled out...

The DARK FIGURE sees the threat and instantly moves his gun from Julie to her...

DARK FIGURE
(warped by slow motion)
No!

DANA sets herself, pulling the gun around to the front and takes it in both hands just as the DARK FIGURE is about to fire his own...

BANG!

SMASH CUT TO

BLACK!

FADE IN

INT. DANA'S BEDROOM/LIGHT ROOMS - 5:00 AM - MOMENTS LATER

41

The COLOR filter of the room now reflects our present reality...it is true time and true color.

WE ARE CLOSE ON DANA'S FACE...peaceful...eyes closed. We start to VERY SLOWLY PULL AWAY and notice that electrodes have been placed on both sides of her temples. PULLING AWAY STILL we see she has earbuds inserted into her ears. PULLING BACK FURTHER STILL we see that she is fitted with a wearable

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

"EKG" vest that can monitor emotional fluctuations that register on the walls by the LED lights.

Her EYES open and she sits up to find her baring. She has for the first time noticed the vest on her body and something on her temples...she peels off the electrodes then looks around in confusion and curiosity...

Some over head light turn on giving the space a "regular room" feel to it and on the walls and ceiling we find the endless FLOOD LAMPS and smaller LED lights in between, covering every square inch.

ANGLE ON ROOM

Dana is on the floor near the closet and stands up to take in the room...we see that this is the same mock construction as earlier of her childhood bedroom...the two walls connected at the far end is where we find JULIE, sitting in the same corner, stuffed animal at her side, and turns towards Dana with a look of absolute pride for her friend. A look of beaming love and of a final relief of years hoping for an impossible miracle. Tears of joy are running down her face.

Julie quietly "psst" someone near her...it is CHRIS who stirs from his lying position and sets himself upright, turning towards Dana with an astounding look of satisfaction and accomplishment.

Near Chris is ALEX who rolls over, wipes the "blood" from his mouth and sincerely and compassionately holds Dana with his eyes. A true gentlemen air.

DANA, dumbfounded and shocked, slowly looks over and away from Chris...and finds him, the DARK FIGURE...

DANA is confused and looks at JULIE for answers.

JULIE
(weeping)
You did it, sweetheart.

Dana looks again at the fallen DARK FIGURE...a GUN in his hand then finally remembers what she did a few moments earlier. She twists around and at her side she finds the .357 Magnum revolver laying on the floor.

She is suddenly overwhelmed with panic and grief-

JULIE
Honey, it's okay! You did nothing
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE (CONT'D)
wrong. You saved us.

Dana looks back at the dark figure...

DANA
Did I kill h-

We ZOOM IN ON the DARK FIGURE...taking a second look when suddenly, he rises up...his back towards us and Dana. He reaches up and takes his dark hood and pulls it back over his head...

The dark figure slowly turns around towards US and Dana and it is DARREL! He strips off his fake scar prosthesis and throws it away.

Darrel is in tears. He has waited for this moments for so long. He takes off the dark rain coat and moves towards his daughter.

DARREL takes Dana with both arms and allows himself to unload on some deep emotions. He notices that DANA is unresponsive...then pulls back and looks into her EYES...light brown and beautiful.

DARREL
I'm so proud of you.

Dana is still processing this whole ordeal with little effect.

JULIE looks at the boys with some apprehension. Then to Darrel.

DARREL
Come on. Let's go see if it worked.

INT. VILLA - FRONT ENTRY - MOMENTS LATER

42

Dana is facing the FRONT DOOR. Darrel, Alex, Chris and Julie are standing behind her.

DARREL
Go ahead. Open it.

After a beat, Dana opens it and a wall of BLACK NIGHT hits her. Again, Dana's reactions are under subtle, as though nothing is getting through.

Darrel moves around and stands in front of his daughter as

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Julie, Chris and Alex walk outside.

DARREL

Come on, let's step out into the dark.

Darrel joins the others outside in the dark and wait for Dana.

DARREL

Come on, honey. You can do it.

DANA is showing no sign of panic...just an air of absence. A sleepwalking look.

DARREL looks OFF SCREEN to his side and after a beat Linda appears and joins them as she puts an arm around Darrel's waste...he puts an arm over her shoulder.

Linda is smiling and encouraging Dana. Hope in her eyes.

LINDA

Come on, Dana. You're ready for this now.

DANA holds still, her EYES begin to move around...coming to life...waking up.

LINDA

There you go.

Linda looks off towards the HORIZON...the first DEEP BLUE RAYS of morning light are rising up.

LINDA

Let's go, Dana. Morning is coming.

Dana's EYES makes contact with each of her friends and her father. They become more excited and animated with this recognition and encourage her more.

JULIE

You can do this.

LINDA looks again at the HORIZON.

LINDA

(quieter, as if a secret is said)
I'm here now.

DANA examines the "closeness" of her dad and Linda..."mom and dad". She finally lets out a held breath from ten years ago

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

and her held emotions finally pour out.

LINDA

Good.

DARREL

There she is.

CLOSE ON DANA'S FOOT...it lifts and moves over the threshold.

Dana, as any normal person would, walks outside in the dark with ease and is joined by her loving family, They tenderly huddle her close as they celebrate with exhales and released nervousness.

The LIGHT BLUE RAYS over the HORIZON give way to a rising BRIGHT SUN that cascades its first morning light onto the group, warming their faces with deliverance.

DARREL

(re: sunrise)

Look at that.

Darrel turns back at DANA...she smiles, like it's taught.

HOLDING TO SLOW on Dana's FACE...SLOWLY FADING TO A WHITE OUT...

INT. HOME - KITCHEN - TWILIGHT

43

DARREL is cooking a gourmet dinner...there isn't a pot or pan he isn't using. Obviously, he's not a gourmet chef but he's celebrating.

Onto a wooden cutting board he places an onion to slice and quickly looks for a knife. Surprisingly, he can't find one easily available in this fiasco.

He goes over to the counter, to the KNIFE BLOCK and searches for the ideal knife...the LARGE CHEF KNIFE...but it is nowhere to be found. He does a "360" in the kitchen and doesn't spot it anywhere.

DARREL

Dana! Have you see my chef knife? I don't seem to be finding it.

He looks in the dishwasher...nothing. He closes the door and thinks. Goes over to the sink...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL
Hey. You there?

At the SINK Darrel moves some dirty dishes out of the way but still it's missing.

Then he notices that Dana hasn't been answering.

He looks out through the kitchen window unto the front yard and scans some toppled over POTTED FLOWERS.

DARREL
Dana!

He walks into the

LIVING ROOM

over towards her favorite couch but she isn't there.

DARREL
Honey! Where are you?

Darrel continues down the

HALLWAY

and comes to her BEDROOM DOOR...it is ajar and he casually looks in...then opens the door wider and we see the room is empty.

DARREL
Dana? Are you in here? I can't find
you anywhere.

GIGGLES!

Darrel looks at the CLOSET DOORS...

DARREL
Dana?

DANA (O.S.)
(a demented voice)
I'm in here.

Darrel reaches for the knobs, holds a beat...then opens the doors wide letting light flood in and we see DANA, with her back toward us, hunched over and morbidly giggling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DARREL

Dana? What are you doing?

DANA slowly turns her FACE towards us...heavy lines of age are seen that weren't there before...an *insane* grin cut across her face.

CLOSE ON HER EYES...BLACK PUPILS!

DANA

I was waiting in the dark!

A LARGE CHEF KNIFE appears from behind her, chrome beams running down its edge...and she suddenly lunges at her father!

To Be Continued...